

# Committee holds college savings plan

By Veronica Daehn  
Staff writer

Sen. Ed Schrock of Elm Creek may get to use a state savings plan to help his grandchildren go to college.

Schrock said he designed his bill, LB1003, to help support his grandchildren and give other Nebraskans the same opportunity.

But the bill that would establish a higher education savings plan in Nebraska was held in the Education Committee on Monday after members heard testimony on the plan.

Based on College Savings Iowa, the savings plan that Iowa uses, Nebraska's plan would give 10 percent of the total money deposited back to students who attend school in Nebraska.

Students could use the money to attend school anywhere, but the state would not add 10 percent if the students went to an out-of-state school.

The 10 percent back is an incentive for students to stay in Nebraska, Schrock said.

"Other colleges are recruiting here, and I want to keep students in Nebraska," he said.

The bill states that a minimum of \$300 must be contributed to the fund per year.

Sen. Deb Suttle of Omaha said an amendment was added today that changed the maximum amount that could be added each year from \$2,000 to something more flexible, but Suttle said the new number had not yet been determined.

The bill went over well in committee, Suttle said, but it wasn't discussed in Executive Session because the committee chairwoman, Sen. Ardyce Bohlke of Hastings, was sick.

"I like the concept, and I think the committee did too," Suttle said. "It is an excellent idea."

Sen. Ron Raikes of Lincoln had a different view, though. He said he didn't know what the future held for LB1003.

"I wish I could tell you exactly what was going to happen with it," he said, "but I just don't know."

"This bill, along with others, tries to provide a mechanism whereby parents are more able to afford tuition for higher education when the time comes," Raikes said.

Suttle and Raikes both mentioned a similar bill introduced by Speaker Doug Kristensen last session.

Suttle said that bill, LB660, also would have created a trust fund to put

## Underage drinking bill debated

MIP from page 1

McNally cited an example of a party held in an open space outdoors. When the police arrived, minors dropped their alcohol and ran.

Even though the minors were obviously intoxicated, the police couldn't charge them with MIP because the minors didn't have physical possession of the alcohol, McNally said.

Jake Bettin, a 17-year-old high school student from Northwest High School in Omaha, said teenagers are aware of the discrepancies within the law.

"To prevent further injuries and deaths, I challenge (the Legislature) to change this law before more innocent lives are taken," Bettin said.

Diane Riibe, executive director of Project Extra Mile, a preventative underage-drinking project, said the current law needs to be clarified because everyone can interpret it differently.

"Without consumption language added into the law, our law enforcement officers' hands continue to be tied," Riibe said.

The current law can also cause confusion for minors themselves, she said.

"The law leads kids to wonder if it is illegal to drink or just illegal to hold a can of beer," she said.

The committee will decide Monday whether it will advance the bill to General File for debate or kill it, Janssen said.

money in for a child's education.

LB660 is still in the Education Committee and will be looked at, along with LB1003, within the next two weeks or so.

Once in Executive Session, the committee can decide to either take no action, advance the bill to general file or indefinitely postpone it.

"(The college savings plan) is an excellent idea," Suttle said. "We would love to donate to something like this for our grandchild."

## Bus accident kills 26 people

QUEENSTOWN, South Africa (AP) — A bus traveling through South Africa's rural southeast skidded off a rain-slicked roadway and overturned in a ditch, killing 26 aboard, police said Monday.

At least five of the dead were children.

Police had earlier put the death toll at 30, but later revised that. They were still trying to determine what caused the accident Sunday evening outside Queenstown, 400 miles south of Johannesburg.

The driver of a car trying to pass said he had to slow down quickly as the bus drifted into the passing lane,

police Capt. Mzoli Kopolo said.

The bus driver was killed, Kopolo said, and passengers in the front who might be able to shed light on the cause of the accident were too seriously injured to question.

The bus had picked up passengers in various towns in Eastern Cape Province and was headed north. Many of the 76 passengers were returning to school, visiting husbands working in the mines or returning from their home villages to work, Kopolo said.

Steady drizzle had caused the two-lane road to become slick, Kopolo said.

## Tutu to speak at Lied Center today

From staff reports

UNL students, faculty and staff will have the chance to hear from a Nobel Peace Prize winner today.

Archbishop Desmond Tutu will speak at the Lied Center for Performing Arts. His speech, "Crying in the Wilderness: Struggle for Justice in South Africa," will begin at 3:30 p.m.

Tutu won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1984 for his work in promoting peace and taking a stand against apartheid in his home country of South Africa.

After the country won the fight against apartheid, Tutu served as chairman of South Africa's Truth and Reconciliation Commission.

The commission was established to investigate crimes committed during the era of apartheid in South Africa.

In 1998, the commission presented its report to President Nelson Mandela.

There is no admission to Tutu's speech and there are no reserved seats. Tutu's appearance will be

broadcast live at Kimball Hall to accommodate overflow seating.

The program will also be broadcast live on education access channel 21.

Tutu comes to campus as part of the 1999-2000 F.N. Thompson Forum series sponsored by the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and the Cooper Foundation.

The next speaker in the series will be Robert McNamara, former secretary of defense. He will speak on Feb. 8.

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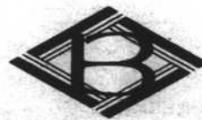
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