

probably adding on a benefit that's not necessary to keep these people in the Guard. Enlisted personnel who are eligible for equivalent federal benefits exclusive of benefits now offered by the new GI bill are also excluded. There is also a restriction as to only one undergraduate degree and that these be for credit bearing classes only. Additionally, a Guard member using the program who voluntarily withdraws from a course is liable for the costs of that course and a Guard member using the program must agree in writing to serve the National Guard for three years after the completion of such tuition credit courses.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Excuse me, Senator Landis. (Gavel.) Could we please hold it down. We're having trouble hearing the speakers and we should listen to them. Thank you. Thank you, Senator Landis.

SENATOR LANDIS: If a Guard member leaves the Guard during this three-year period, the member may be asked to reimburse the state for the cost of the courses. And lastly, it says that the military department may establish limitations and controls to assure efficiency and productivity under the program so that should there be additional limitations, it would be possible for them to do so and they may interpret these. There are still those who would be affected by this bill and they have continued to write to you. The large majority of instances, however, have been dealt with. Many of these recommendations came to us from the command staff, from the enlisted personnel association or from the officers association. Now they are not totally in accord. The committee continued to look and created a slightly tighter program than they would have asked for. I think the officers feel a little slighted because if they're working on a master's degree or a law degree during their first ten years of Guard service, they're not covered by the program anymore. However, generally it's a cost saving measure. Let me conclude by saying this. This credit program was begun many years ago for a special circumstance. Times have changed. We are no longer at 60 percent Guard strength, we are at 103 percent Guard strength. We're no longer looking at a situation where you have a 2.7 percent unemployment rate as we did when this program began, but an 8 percent unemployment rate. There are many reasons why people would want to be in the Guard. Because we have a large body of people who want to be in the Guard, we don't necessarily have to bid as highly as we used to to keep them or to attract them into the Guard, and for that reason it seems to me that it's all right to go in and trim somewhat this credit program. I move for the adoption of the committee