

certainly do need it because it is obvious by the time these youngsters reach high school and college level, they are taking already remedial courses. So something must be lacking. Maybe it is that we don't pay the teachers enough. Maybe we don't pay the teachers enough because we are pouring that money down the drains of the swimming pools. But you do away with the frills and you will get Senator Marge Higgins to vote with you. But as long as you consider these things educational, I can't go along with it.

SPEAKER NICHOL: One minute.

SENATOR HIGGINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Withem, please.

SENATOR WITHEM: Yes. Mr. President and members, I will be incredibly brief. Minds are pretty well made up on this and the votes are either here or they aren't. I just wanted to clarify in case there are any questions in anybody's mind, there appeared to be a little bit of confusion right after lunch because of some letters that were circulated explaining a different amendment. The letters that you received from Senator Hartnett were a different amendment that Senator Hartnett and I had offered and may offer at a later time. This amendment is simply one that says we reduce the cut to state aid to education to 2 percent across the board as opposed to the 3 percent as now listed. A few days ago we voted to put \$1.6 million back into the University budget to educate the higher..to help higher education in the state. What we are asking is we do the same thing for elementary and secondary education, vote to put 1 percent back into the budget. It is admittedly an expensive proposition but I don't believe it is one that is going to totally break the budget. I will treat all education the same. I urge you to support the reconsideration.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Abboud, please. Senator Chris Abboud. Okay, you were the last one, but thank you, Senator Abboud. Senator Hartnett, did you wish to close on your motion to return the bill?

SENATOR HARTNETT: Yes, just very briefly is all, Mr. Speaker. I think, like Senator Withem said, I think people...the issue was discussed this morning and so forth.