

April 1, 1986

LB 1251

and so I ask your support on this amendment.

SENATOR CARSTEN: Thank you, Senator Nichol. Senator Nelson, on the Nichol amendment to LB 1251.

SENATOR NELSON: Mr. Speaker, members of the body, I, too, have to rise in support of this funding. I think most of you know that Senator Smith and I had the opportunity to study, a task force last year, on LPN and RN nursing degrees and so on. What we found is exactly true of what Senator Nichol said, that the diploma program and the two-year RN program is eventually, probably going to go by the wayside. I guess I'll take an opportunity at this time to report to the body. We were able to make some accomplishments that they told us that there had been too much disagreement between the nursing associations and so on that could not be accomplished. What we found that needed to be done was the LPNs allowed to move up the ladder, so to speak, and eventually receive their RN degree. This we were able to accomplish and without too much statute change and I am happy to say that the technical community colleges now are offering a two-year course and moving up to eventually the RN. And we did find another thing that really concerned us is that if the nurses training is taken all of it in Omaha or Lincoln area, that in general is where those nurses stay. Senator Nichol is right. We definitely need something outstate. Even for these people to travel to North Platte, Nebraska, is still a lot of miles and they get just as sick in western Nebraska or central Nebraska as they do in eastern Nebraska. I know that I'm standing here asking for, I'm not quite sure, I think it's about \$75,000, but this is definitely needed. The university has agreed to this, but it is a matter of the funding. Something else that I might point out to you is the reciprocal agreement between states. If Nebraska's nurses do not have the baccalaureate degree and so on, that is, some cases they will find themselves, and I think it's the case between Wyoming and Nebraska right now and I think Senator Nichol may know a little more about it. I'm sorry I didn't have all my figures in front of me, but again, our nurses will be locked into a lower degree and they will not be able to, if it's necessary, move with their family or so on and I truly support this and we do not have any other RN program out in the western part of the state and it is definitely needed there and it is supported by the local community.

SENATOR CARSTEN: Thank you. Senator Baack, please, on the Nichol amendment to 1251.