

a desirable program but not an essential program, inasmuch as the essentiality of the program has already been assured to men and women throughout our state by our funding a variety of public programs in nursing and, of course, by the private ventures that exist throughout Nebraska for nurse training. I know it's difficult for Senator Scofield, who comes from that area, and Senator Nichol who comes from that area, and other members of the Legislature who feel the need, rightfully so, to represent their constituents to make certain that they have this particular kind of program in their own district. But when you get down to making choices, which is a better choice, for example, to maintain social services programs in all of the counties? I noted that our Department of Social Services is suggesting that they will close out county offices in like 40 different counties; or instead to start a brand new program when, in fact, nurse training does exist in Nebraska, publicly funded, privately maintained, available to all men and to all women who choose to make the distance to live away from home for a temporary period to obtain their degrees. I think Senator Chambers is correct. I will support his amendment.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Wesely, then Senator Goodrich.

SENATOR WESELY: Mr. Speaker and members, I, too, would rise in support of the Chambers amendment, not because I support the elimination of the money for that program or think it isn't a good program, but because of the same reasons Senator Johnson talked about and Senator Chambers talked about. I think there is a lesson here we need to learn. When we talk of cuts in a general sense, if we say, cut the budget to balance the budget, I would guess you would get 70, 80, 90 percent support among the general public and members of this Legislature as that being a primary goal to achieve in this legislative session, balance the budget by cutting the budget and go home and don't raise taxes. But let me tell you that that argument loses support rapidly when you talk about a particular program. Now you have got a major cut here for the University and, generally speaking, I think there is probably going to be support for it here on the floor. You don't know what the results of those cuts are because they don't know what those cuts are going to mean, but it's going to be supported in the abstract because we need to balance the budget. But one particular item in that University budget is being proposed for elimination and that is the nursing program in Scottsbluff, and because you can understand that one program, you can see the merits of that one program, there is a desire to have it funded and reintroduce it so that it is not