

have pending, Mr. President, an amendment by Senator Scofield. (Read Scofield amendment as found on page 35 of the Legislative Journal.)

SENATOR CARSTEN PRESIDING

SENATOR CARSTEN: Senator Scofield, on your amendment, please.

SENATOR SCOFIELD: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and members. After our discussion yesterday regarding the Scottsbluff nursing program, I detected a primary concern and that is we don't want to add new programs, and so I am going to bring you an alternative proposal here which is not new, and I believe in the past this has been proposed, and I think it is time and appropriate that we consider the option that I am bringing to you. But what I heard you say on the floor yesterday was we don't have anything against the Scottsbluff program. We are just not interested in adding those costs to the program right now, and so, let me before I present this proposal to you, refresh your memory of where we were yesterday when we left off. What, you know, one of my constituents told me when I came down here the other day was he said, well, I am not really very worried about what you can do because there isn't much you can do to hurt me. Well, this fellow happens to live in a very rural part of Nebraska and that is probably true. He gets next to no services from the State of Nebraska by virtue of his location in the state. But, nevertheless, his perception probably isn't 100 percent accurate and that is certainly the case of the Scottsbluff nursing program. We have 40 students there, freshmen students, right now enrolled in the program. It is a longstanding program that was started at Western Nebraska General Hospital and has now evolved into what will be a bachelors degree of nursing program. That is the trend that the nursing business is going, and whether you like it or not, or whether I like it or not, that is where it is, and we are going to need those kinds of trained people out there, and we have people currently in the program. The need is there and we have made the commitment to these students, and it does address what I anticipate to be very serious future needs in rural Nebraska because of the aging population and because of the health care problems that we face, and that is well documented everywhere in rural areas. You heard much comment yesterday about, well, we have enough nursing schools in the State of Nebraska. In fact, I believe Senator Johnson said we have eight programs. Let me remind you that every one of those programs is from Kearney east, so you are talking about a good two-thirds of the state