

SENATOR CARSTEN: Thank you. Senator Nichol, please.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Mr. President, Senator Scofield has offered me part of her closing so I will speak at that time. Thank you.

SENATOR CARSTEN: Very good. Senator Higgins, please.

SENATOR HIGGINS: Thank you, Mr. President. Last year, I believe it was, when we had the Special Session, we cut the UNMC, the Medical Center in Omaha, and the Board of Regents then gave the job to the chancellors of deciding which programs they would do away with. So after much soul-searching and discussion, the chancellor at the Med Center in Omaha said that the best thing that he could come up with would be to close the School of Pharmacy and the Nursing School. Well, because of the pressure that was put on by so many people, after asking the chancellor who runs the University Med Center to make his decision, the Board of Regents went against it and kept the School of Nursing open and the School of Pharmacy. Now in Omaha we have four programs for nursing education. I am from Omaha. I should be against what I am going to say but I think as long as we have four programs now in Omaha, it would be more equitable if we closed the one in Omaha and transferred it to Scottsbluff, and the three that would be left admittedly are private, but those men and women that want to go to a School of Nursing in Omaha would only be an hour or so's drive to Lincoln if they wanted to go to UN-L. At the same time, we could transfer that program out to Scottsbluff and accomplish what Senator Scofield is trying to do and Senator Nichol, his School of Nursing out west. So I am going to vote right now with Senator Scofield, and, if that fails, I have no qualms about doing away with the School of Nursing at the University in Omaha because one of the things I have been concerned with and what I have been working on all summer is overlapping in boards and commissions that we have of duties, and if this could save money and at the same time preserve a program that obviously the Legislature last year voted for, then I would be willing to do it and, incidentally, the Med Center is right in the heart of my district but I still believe that this would be the fairer thing to do. But I will support Senator Scofield's amendment. Thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR CARSTEN: Thank you. Senator Abboud, please.

SENATOR ABBODD: Question.