

SENATOR CARSTEN: The Schmit amendment has been adopted.

CLERK: Mr. President, the next amendment I have to the bill is by Senator Scofield and Senator Nichol.

SENATOR CARSTEN: Senator Scofield, Senator...who is going to take it? Senator Scofield, on your amendment to LB 1, please.

SENATOR SCOFIELD: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. This amendment simply gives you an opportunity to reconsider your actions earlier and gives you an opportunity to rethink the merits of the Scottsbluff nursing program. And after talking to some of you on the floor here, I understand that you still have some questions about that program which I know we can answer sufficiently. And also if you have read some of the editorials in both of our major papers, you may be even further misinformed, so let me start from the beginning. The Scottsbluff nursing program is not a new program as has been presented by the editorials and on this floor. It has been around for over 60 years. The changes in the nursing profession have meant that whether we like it or not nurses now have to have a four-year degree, or will soon, as opposed to the three-year training. So at Scottsbluff they have been training people the three-year degree. We made the agreement to go ahead and let them join with the University and start offering that four-year degree program. So we have a long history of offering this program. It is far from being a brand new program. Another thing that you need to know about this program that I haven't pointed out earlier to you is in an era when we are facing very tight budgets and need to be, in my opinion, encouraging cooperation and sharing of resources among institutions, this, in fact, is becoming a model in that direction because there are shared resources and shared activities on this program with the Scottsbluff Hospital, with Chadron State College, with Nebraska Western and with the University. It seems to me that this is the kind of thing that we have to encourage and put models out there so that other institutions in this state can also be encouraged to do those sorts of things. It is cost effective. It serves an area...it serves the needs of an area and, in fact, should be the kind of thing that through our role and mission study in other places we are going to be looking for more of and not less of. Another thing I keep hearing from all of you is, well, these are just young folks and they could go anyplace. Let me tell you that the enrollment at the Scottsbluff nursing program are primarily place-bound people, nontraditional people, who simply don't have