

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office
FLOOR DEBATE

March 10, 2004 LB 1005, 1054

Foley's amendment.

SENATOR CUDABACK: The amendment has been adopted. Before we go on, Senator Schimek would like to announce that the cookies you are getting are from the Girl Scouts. And like to...joining in on their ninety-second birthday. Over 20,000 girls, ages 5-18, enjoying in the membership. So let's give them a hand. Thank you. Thank you very much. Mr. Clerk.

ASSISTANT CLERK: Mr. President, Senator Cunningham would move to amend with AM2910. (Legislative Journal page 890.)

SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Cunningham, to open on AM2910 to LB 1005.

SENATOR CUNNINGHAM: Thank you, Senator Cudaback and members. AM2910 consists of a bill, LB 1054, that was amended by the Health Committee. And this public hearing was held on February 5, between the Health...on the Health and Human Services Committee, and they voted to advance the bill with a 7 to 0 vote. LB 1054 proposes to amend the Rural Health Systems and Professional Incentive Act. The act consists of three parts. And I'm going to just tell you the part that I'm trying to amend, and that's the establishment of a student loan program providing financial incentives to certain students who agree to practice in a designated health profession shortage area within Nebraska. LB 1054 amends the student loan program by adding master's- and doctorate-level mental health students. Currently, the student loan program applies to medical, dental, and physician assistant students. Under LB 1054, mental health students are defined as graduate students enrolled in or accepted for enrollment in a mental health practice program that offers a mental...that offers a master's or doctorate degree and meets the educational requirements for licensure in mental health practice or psychology by the state of Nebraska HHS Regulation and Licensure. Under current student loan program, an eligible student is limited to \$20,000 per year but not to exceed \$80,000 for medical and dental students, or \$20,000 for physician assistant students. Under LB 1054, the doctorate-level mental health students would fall under the \$80,000 cap, and the master's-level health students would fall