

very late the other night. Arlene, I cannot find one thing wrong with that bill. He suggested, and as I said, and I will offer...and, incidentally, Senator Stevens, if you IPP it you won't be able to do all these changes...

SPEAKER BARRETT: One minute.

SENATOR NELSON: ...in the top of page 3, to tighten it up some more, if we have any concern about this I will change it, nursing credits, and after that, add "at a State Board of Nursing approved nursing program in the State of Nebraska". I will tighten it up that much more. I have tried to visit with different groups, different institutions, different colleges, it's not limited to the public institution. That girl can use that for St. Mary's, Creighton, wherever, program. We only have...really don't have an associate degree program, many of them, in the state right now. Metro has one, some in Omaha, North Platte is trying to get one started, and hopefully we'll have one at Central Platte and maybe Norfolk. The need is there. It is so severe. I can't even begin to think why someone would say this is not one of the most important and critical areas. I know, if you want, I can amend the bill to add \$1,000 if you think...

SPEAKER BARRETT: Time has expired.

SENATOR NELSON: ...this is not enough.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Senator Schmit, please.

SENATOR SCHMIT: Mr. President and members, my sister is Director of the nursing program at Berkeley, California. You've heard of that little institution. Asked her some time ago, how do you get more people into the nursing profession and she answered in two words, pay them. I think that no matter what you do here you're not going to get people into the nursing profession unless the salaries improve. I believe it was mentioned here earlier there is a great disparity also between the urban and the rural pay scales and I think you have to do something about that. And we have the same problem in our rural areas and we've referred to it many times and that is that some of our small hospitals are struggling and they have an extremely difficult time to try to meet those payrolls so they have a tendency to pay much less out there than they do in the urban areas. The question that you're raising here is very simple and