

I support the amendment but it just does not go quite far enough. Thank you.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Senator Withem.

SENATOR WITHEM: Yes, Mr. Speaker, members of the body, if you recall when this bill was discussed a couple of weeks ago, I had a kill motion on the bill, a reluctant kill motion. It was a bill that came out of the Education Committee. My concerns were not with the need to attract more nurses into the nursing profession. That is a given, and I think you lawyers in here talked about stipulating certain facts, that we were prepared to do that and didn't need to discuss that any further. My concerns were whether this particular bill would, in fact, make any impact on that situation. The three concerns were that it was not need-based, 357 as originally written, number one. Number two, it was an after-the-fact type of reimbursement as opposed to an up front cost to help the student with his or her nursing costs, and, thirdly, I questioned whether it was enough of an impact, and those are the reasons I opposed the bill. Senator Nelson agreed to the bracketing, has worked on an amendment to it which I think improves the situation somewhat. I don't know if it will be enough to, if this is the only thing we do with the bill, I don't know if it will be enough to gain my support of the bill, but I do believe she has worked hard on an amendment that deals with at least the need factor, and also is capping the amount of the appropriation, which was not a terrible concern of mine, although I know at the end of the session it will be a concern. So with those two things, and because I also tend to believe that in most cases legislators ought to have the opportunity to get their bills into the type of shape that they want to have them, I am going to support this amendment at this time, and reserve judgment on how I will vote on the entire bill when we finally get around to voting on that.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Senator Nelson.

SENATOR NELSON: Yes, I would like to respond to Senator Schellpeper's question, that when I amended it, AM0514, 2/22, it is in Section 3, "A person enrolled or accepted for enrollment in an accredited postsecondary nursing program in the State of Nebraska may be awarded a financial incentive up to five hundred dollars upon application to the institution in which the student is enrolled or accepted...." The State of Nebraska, the Department of Education is not going to give that to someone