

nurses for two years, which is what the amendment says, we plan to have a scholarship the first year of \$1,000, and they will be selected on a...the first priority will be residents of rural areas; the second will be financial need; and the third will be to nontraditional and ethnic minority students. So we're trying to help everyone that would not necessarily go into nursing. We currently have a scholarship program out there. But a lot of the people that we think that this bill would help do not use that. And we think by having this \$1,000 scholarship and...we'll get them there. We also have a \$1,000 incentive to get them back to rural Nebraska for another two years. So the first year will be 60 nurses for \$1,000, and then the second year we will have 120 nurses at \$1,000. Then if that 120 nurses would go back to rural Nebraska that would be an additional \$1,000 then for another two years. I realize we probably won't get them all back. But hopefully if we can get that nurse that has a family, this wife, this mother, to go into nursing in some school in Nebraska that she will stay in rural Nebraska. But this is the amendment that...the amendment now is the bill. I'd be glad to answer any questions. Thank you.

PRESIDENT: Senator Dierks, please.

SENATOR DIERKS: Mr. President, members of the body, I'm, of course, standing in support of this legislation. I've signed on the bill with Senator Schellpeper. I think it's of vital importance to rural Nebraska that these types of legislation are enacted. We need...a very strong need for medical service in rural Nebraska. People are not coming back there, and we need to do something about that. This type legislation, I believe, will provide the incentive for these people to be educated in rural Nebraska, then the likelihood that they'll stay there to practice their profession is much greater. There's...Every week I get letters from some place across my district or across Nebraska where people are complaining or concerned about the fact that they don't have enough registered nurses to keep their hospitals open and their nursing homes open. And anybody that's heard that we don't have a shortage of nurses hasn't heard the true facts because it just isn't so, we do have a shortage and it's vitally important that this type legislation be available to help us revitalize rural health care in rural Nebraska. I just urge your supporting this amendment and the bill. Thank you.

PRESIDENT: Senator Nelson, on the Schellpeper amendment.