

discussion and consideration and contemplation, and this amendment is offered after that further review. The only thing I would caution you is that it is less, or let us say more modest an approach than what we envisioned last year. I consider it a first step. I consider it an initial effort to deal with this problem. And it's quite likely that it will require further follow-up in years ahead. But, considering that last year we passed the legislation and had it vetoed, I would hope that this more modest approach would be able to be passed and signed by the Governor and would become law. We cannot afford to wait any longer for action on this problem. So, with that understanding, I would encourage your support for Senator Schellpeper's amendment and for the bill.

PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator Schellpeper, please, followed by Senator Crosby.

SENATOR SCHELLPEPER: I'll pass at the present time. Thank you.

PRESIDENT: All right, thank you. Senator Crosby.

SENATOR CROSBY: Thank you, Mr. President and members. I'm really pleased to stand and support this amendment and the legislation. Just two things before I say what I want to say about the nursing profession in general. I'm not going to talk about the technical side of it, because I know, because I've talked to Senator Schellpeper, he has addressed some of those problems and is working out a lot of them. In the first place, somebody asked about the term "nontraditional". That's a nice euphemism for older people. I was a nontraditional student when I finished my degree. So we clear that up. The other thing someone mentioned that we need to address the masters programs for nurses. We have already done part of that. Last year I was very pleased to be a part of the effort to get the Coordinating Commission on Postsecondary Education to approve a masters program at Union College, here in Lincoln, and they already have 46 students, 46 nurses who are taking advantage of that program. So I was very pleased that that happened, and that was done without legislation, because all they needed was the approval. I think what I'd like to say to you this morning, and I've said this before, the nursing profession is the profession that many of us, when you have a health problem, the nurse is the one that you depend on for a lot of your care, most of your care. If you go to the doctor's office or if you call the doctor with a problem, whom do you speak to? The nurse. If you're in the