

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

March 24, 2000 LB 1399

away, the employee would also go away. So I...I know that's a fast explanation. I think it's a very exciting idea. If we could entice 500 teachers to...500 students to commit to teaching in Nebraska or 500 teachers to furthering their education and becoming more accomplished teachers, or some combination thereof, I think that this certainly doesn't solve any problems but it makes a dent, and it's a wise expenditure of our General Funds. So with that, I would be happy to take any questions and comments.

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: Senator Bohlke.

SENATOR BOHLKE: Thank you, Mr. President and members. I rise in support of the Schimek amendment. We went ahead and held a special public hearing, as Senator Schimek indicated, because when the idea came, it was after we had stopped having hearings, and I thought it was good to have a public hearing and allow people to come in and testify. I want to tell you that one of the individuals testifying was from UNL who indicated that this year from Teachers College at UNL, we will have 168 graduates. I asked them to get me the numbers from past years and I wanted to tell you that in 1990 we had 266 graduates; in 1996, 240 graduates; and in the year 2000 we will have only 168 graduates. As an example, in art K through 12, we only have two graduates from the university; English, five; math, ten. There are then two pages attached to the information I requested that lists all the schools that will be coming in recruiting those 168 graduates. That's why I think something like this is going to be very beneficial to attract teachers, to recruit teachers to Nebraska by something that I would think that they would find very favorable, up to \$4,500, and possibly for two years, for loan forgiveness. That's a great deal of money, and we're talking about the possibility of that being available to a large number of teachers. In addition to that, those teachers, existing teachers who would become the AmeriCorps teachers could use it to go back to school. Senator Vrtiska, I see, has his light on. He shared some information with me of something that's happening because of I think salary benefits in his district. But I do believe that this is something that we will come out of this session on LB 1399 that has some broad applications for a large number of teachers, and as Senator Schimek indicated, with the possibility of up to 500. So I