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replacement nurses will be needed by 2012. Unfortunately, many of those wishing to attend nursing schools are blocked due to lack of faculty. That same faculty shortage makes it difficult for current nurses to obtain their advanced degrees. The shortage covers the entire industry. The Chicago Sun-Times had a recent article about measures in Illinois to boost the ranks of front-line caregivers for our aging population. The Governor of Illinois is asking for \$1.5 million in grants to expand graduates by adding teachers. He also wants \$150,000 to supplement the salaries of 15 nursing educators in the Chicago area. As you can see, this problem exists in even the very populated states. Since the Illinois article appeared in February, the state of Tennessee has published news reports of that state's shortage, and the March 5 edition of the Lincoln Journal Star had a full-page report on the nursing shortage recently. Perhaps you read it and saw the statistics. In conclusion, LB 962 is my priority bill to fund a nursing faculty student loan forgiveness program. The bill asks for a one-time, I repeat, a one-time appropriation of \$150,000 as seed money to show the state's commitment to expanding our nursing ranks. I could give you many statistics about shortages and our aging population which would require more nursing care starting today. Our sparse population of 1.7 million is a factor in this shortage, the same as that affects many other bills that have been debated on this floor. It's my hope that others will see Nebraska's commitment to this loan program and be encouraged to join in the effort to further educate current nurses who wish to become nursing faculty. There is an A bill to follow, and I will be happy to answer any questions. I thank you for your attention.

SENATOR SCHIMEK PRESIDING

SENATOR SCHIMEK: Thank you, Senator Price. Mr. Clerk, are there amendments?

ASSISTANT CLERK: Madam President, Senator Beutler would offer FA551. (Legislative Journal page 967.)

SENATOR SCHIMEK: Senator Beutler, you are recognized to open on your amendment. Senator Beutler.