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FLOOR DEBATE

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guess I would start, Senator Chambers, thank you for the kind words. (Laughter) And I'm not going to use my whole amount of time. I'd like to hear what other people have to say about this bill today. I know Senator Chambers has a lot of concerns, with the 13 weeks especially, and I know, Senator Chambers, you're not going to believe this, but this didn't start with business. This started with myself and Senator Bourne having the discussion and meeting with organized labor first. So I would (laugh)...but anyway, that's the truth. That's where it started. And it's a lot of meetings have ensued and we've got a compromise here. Organized labor, the business community, everyone is on board. And if we're going to talk about the 13 weeks, we had that debate last year that you all remember and we did run into major problems on the floor of the Legislature. And we included extra reasons for good cause quits that are in the bill, and Senator Combs and Senator Redfield have both talked about some of those reasons, but I'll go into those again because it's very, very important. A person who has made a reasonable effort to preserve employment voluntarily but leaves. Oh, I guess that one was already in the bill, I'm sorry. If you leave to accompany your spouse to the spouse's employment in a different city or new military duty station, that was a major concern Senator Beutler had last year. We've included that in the bill so right...as a good cause quit. So currently someone in that position, they're going to have a waiting period when they fall into that position. They're going to have a seven- to ten-week waiting period. In this bill, they're going to be able to collect immediately. We had construction worker language in the bill that came from organized labor because some of the things that are done in the construction industry are a little different than the rest, so that's in the bill. And those people, if they fall into that position, are going to collect immediately. They're not going to have a seven- to ten-week wait, but that was part of the deal-making process that we went through. We all worked very hard together. I know Senator Chambers has told you that I do everything for the business community. I think that if you were to ask many people out there, I stood up for organized labor many, many times in these negotiations. You can actually ask the Department of Labor when we were in smaller meetings. I stood up for organized labor when there was no one there from their side to defend their