

listening.

SENATOR COPE: Senator Cullan, at this time I'm going to support it for this reason, I am not sure at all that we do have the right information and I question sometimes whether it's being spent for the cause or for staff, but on the other hand, I am sure that the secondary I'll say costs that are caused by intoxication are much, much more than the state is receiving, so if we're getting it in general funds to help pick up some of these costs so far I'm with you.

SPEAKER MARVEL: Before we proceed, from Senator Hoagland's district in the north balcony we welcome 11 seniors, 1 teacher from Cathedral High, Omaha, Nebraska. The instructor is Nikki Maliha. Will you indicate your presence so we can say good morning to you? Thank you. The Chair recognizes Senator Nichol.

SENATOR NICHOL: Mr. Chairman and members of the Legislature, I like you, would like to see this alcoholic problem go away. It just doesn't go away. Now Senator Venditte up and said a minute ago it's a waste of taxpayer's money. That's baloney. Everything is a waste of taxpayer's money that the problem isn't solved. I could stand up here and say, we should do away with prosecutors, defenders, because crime is still increasing. I won't say that because we're still trying. I could stand up here and say it's a waste of taxpayer's money to be spending it on equal opportunity because there is still discrimination. That doesn't mean we quit just because we haven't solved the whole problem. Alcoholism is a problems business and it's going to continue to be a problems business, and it just doesn't go away. I commend Senator Cullan on his work on this thing. It's not a popular thing to do in your own home area. When you're spending money on alcoholism treatment it's not a popular thing. People do not like to have tax dollars spent to fight alcoholism, especially those who do not have an alcoholism problem. Now, what have we been doing in the last two years? We've been taking money from the alcoholic agencies, such as beer, wine and liquor, and spending it on these programs. That's what we've been doing. That's what Senator Cullan is attempting to continue to do, and here we have people standing up and saying, let's quit, let's go back, let's go back from decriminalization of alcoholism, let's go back where we were four or five years ago instead of continuing to try to do what is the right thing. Those who work in alcoholism say, it's the right thing to do, to