

As a matter of fact the state employees are living under this right now. We put this provision in the state employees' section of law last session and that, in fact, is in force now so it shouldn't have any implication under current negotiations. A second point is that looking down the future, they ought to know one way or the other what the intent of the people of Nebraska is to their elected representatives and for us to clearly and concisely demonstrate what the intent is, this legislation should pass emphatically with the emergency clause.

SPEAKER MARVEL: Senator Chambers, do you want to speak to the emergency clause?

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Mr. Chairman and members of the Legislature, I don't think that we are really so far touching on what the concerns that led to this bill are or the concerns that would lead people to oppose it. The issue really is abortion and a person's attitude toward it. I think we ought to go ahead and strip the issue bare so that we can know what it is that we are talking about this morning and anybody who listens or would read the discussion, the transcription of the discussion will know what it is that we are talking about. The emergency clause is designed, I think, to strengthen the position of those who say that the Legislature composed primarily of men ought to be able to determine whether or not a woman can decide to have an abortion. That is what the issue is. The Legislature attempted in various other ways at other times to enact legislation that would restrict the right of a woman to get an abortion and those provisions by and large have been stricken down as unconstitutional. So what some people in the Legislature and some people outside the Legislature are trying to do by this bill is to say that despite the fact that abortion is recognized as a legitimate medical procedure, despite the fact that the Supreme Court has ruled that there are certain restrictions that cannot be imposed by the state, these people in the Legislature are going to force their will on other employees of the state. Do you know why I say other employees rather than all employees? Because there is only a certain category of employee that the senators want to deny medical coverage under these group plans. So to put the emergency clause serves no purpose really other than to say, this is a second punch that can be taken, it can be ramrodded through and there is nothing anybody can do about it. I don't think that Senator Dworak or anybody who supports this bill would say that the cost of the coverage itself has any influence whatsoever on their decision to proceed in this fashion but if they insist on doing this, I do have