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LB 478

making a comprehensive change but I don't think on the floor of the Legislature is the place to do it. My original bill was for equity under one category of neuromuscular-neurological disease and I agree that maybe we should look at this. As a matter of fact, Senator Wesely, I am sorry that your committee did not introduce a bill like this since you considered this and talked about it because I think it would have been a good idea. But it is something that is going to take a lot of study, and I think a lot of public input, and I don't believe at this time that we should be making those kind of decisions off the seat of our pants, so to speak. So I would oppose this amendment.

SENATOR CLARK: All those in favor of the Beutler amendment... we gather that he wants to close so he has five minutes to close. Senator Beutler.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Mr. Speaker, members of the Legislature, it has been interesting to hear the debate on this particular subject but let me ask you. Have you heard one person stand up and make the distinction between a person who has lost two legs or a person who lost two arms or a person who is totally disabled because he has a heart attack and is not covered by the bill? Has one person made that distinction? The answer is no. Nobody has made that distinction because I don't think there is a distinction. All you have heard are questions as to the wide applicability of this bill and who all does it apply to. It applies to the totally disabled. We have definitions for use already with regard to what totally disabled means and we can more specifically reference those if we want to. That is not a problem. How widespread would the use of the exemption be if we had all totally disabled? I don't have the figures for you but I can assure you that it is not the scary problem that everybody has insinuated. First of all you have to be totally disabled. There just aren't that many people in the state who are totally disabled. Secondly, and I may not have offered the amendment had not the income provision been added but now the income provision has been added. So before anybody gets any money, he has to be totally disabled and his income has to be less than \$6,300 a year. Now how many people like that are there in the state? I think that is about all that there is to be said about this particular amendment. The question is very fundamental. Do you treat everybody in the same category, all those totally disabled the same, or do you pretend? Do you perpetuate the pretense that somehow one kind of total disability deserves an exemption and another type does not? Again, I ask you to adopt the amendment and to state legislatively what the policy of this state is with regard to that question in a manner that