

there has not been a raid on the trust fund. Now that could leave two possible answers to that. One is, is that possibly too much is being paid in, which could very likely be the case, but another is, is that people don't qualify to receive those benefits because if you look at some of the other handouts that you received over the years or if you look at some of the testimony that was presented to the committee when this bill was presented, Nebraska is the most difficult state to qualify for unemployment benefits in the country by over 120,000 percent. If you look at the bar graph and there is usually a bar graph that is handed out at the hearing, Nebraska is at the top and the bar graph goes clear off to the right side of the page and nobody else comes close in terms of rejecting folks for unemployment. In Nebraska you can go back to your last, not just the last job that you had, but the previous job before that and we make it extremely difficult for individuals who need this help to even qualify, not to mention the fact that the amount that they are eligible for in terms of the maximum amount once they qualify, is at the bottom end of the scale across the country. Now some of the things Senator Coordsen says are right on. I mean, he has done a very good job of explaining some of the problems that have befallen unemployment funds across the country. There clearly have been cases, for example, in Illinois, in Iowa and other states much farther away that have bankrupted those funds because of some of the benefits that...and I would even use the term exorbitant benefits that some of them allow for. This proposal that Senator Lindsay offers is not an exorbitant benefit. It doesn't even come close to that and when you compound that with the eligibility requirements that we place on any recipient that has to qualify in the State of Nebraska, there is no way that those individuals are going to make a raid on the Unemployment Trust Fund. If you look just at the growth that has taken place in the fund, part of it probably has to do with good management, I clearly would give that to the Department of Labor. But another part has to do with the fact that those funds aren't being expended and they clearly aren't being expended at a level that by any means would encourage someone to stay on unemployment. That is never the case and Senator Crosby clearly pointed out that it is approximately 13 weeks at which the average person uses unemployment. They do it basically till they can find another job and then they get off of it because there is no benefit in staying on it. It does not pay the bills. What we need to do is make sure, through the Lindsay amendment to the committee amendments, is that we bring that unemployment level up to a