

pay in unemployment compensation benefits, they will receive the same amount in those benefits, if they are discharged by an employer and convicted of using drugs, or even if they refuse testing. So I think this is a good way to help them. Like the senator said that this would be paid out of that contingency fund, which is...the money is raised by the fines and from the Department of Labor. And so I certainly think that this would certainly add to the amendment that I've introduced. So I would encourage you to support it.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Senator Morrissey, followed by Senator Crosby and Elmer.

SENATOR MORRISSEY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, members. I would rise in support of Senator Coordsen's amendment. It was one of the things that we discussed in Business and Labor that we had problems with on this disqualification for unemployment. In our rush to punish, our rush to get tough on the "drug abusers" we often enact laws that sometimes have the opposite effect. To take away the benefits from a person can drive them farther into the spiral of drug abuse, low self-esteem, and as Senator Coordsen mentioned have an adverse effect on their family. I think you should support Senator Coordsen's amendment because, as he said earlier, it's the fair thing to do, it's the right thing to do, and then we can discuss the entire amendment later. Thank you.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Senator Crosby, would you care to speak to the amendment?

SENATOR CROSBY: Yes, thank you, Mr. Speaker and members. I do support the amendment. And I was having a little trouble with having LB 1173 amended into this bill for several reasons, one of which has been mentioned. But one of the reasons is that under 1173, as it stands alone, alcoholism was not mentioned. And I think alcoholism, we all recognize, is a drug. Alcohol is a drug, and I think it should be a part of this amendment. So I like Senator Coordsen's amendment into it. In general, I particularly am concerned about drugs and alcohol and usage on the job in any job that concerns the safety of other people. And so when I first learned that 1173 was going to be amended into this bill, I wasn't too enthusiastic about it because it seemed like we were saying, here we're going to give you a raise in unemployment, except we're not going to allow you to have it, if you don't do all these other things. But by putting this