

you went into a drug or alcohol treatment program, basic concept, I think, that's there. There is also a drug standard amendment, I think Senator Hall got adopted. All, again, I want to reiterate is I understand the intent and I applaud the desire of members of this body to try and encourage people to move off of drugs, to get themselves taken care of and to be on the job without having a drug or alcohol problem. I think punitive measures have some purpose in that desire. But let me tell you that punitive measures alone do not solve the problem. And, unfortunately, in all the debate that we have had this year, dealing with all of these drug bills, they have all taken that approach. They have all dealt with the idea of taking away rights and benefits and privileges and where is the other side of the equation, the programs to help these people deal with their problem? That's the question I'm trying to raise on the floor as we debate this amendment. I am more than willing to support the Hefner amendment if it would include the funding to pay for these employees' treatment programs. If somewhere we could find the money and the ability, Senator Hefner, for these employees to have the ability to pay for these treatment programs, then it makes sense, then it makes sense. But right now these are workers with very little savings, with very little income, losing their job, going on unemployment and thus not having financial resources to afford treatment programs but being told if you're in a treatment program, well, we'll pay you the paltry unemployment compensation benefits you're entitled to. Treatment programs cost four or five, six thousand dollars. Even those among us that have adequate incomes, decent incomes, would have a difficult time affording five or six thousand dollar treatment programs. We have, in this state, a gap, a problem. The Medicaid program does not provide for inpatient treatment programs. Our insurance companies are cutting back coverage of this program. Many companies have employees without any coverage whatsoever. How do people afford the treatment programs that they need and they deserve? And, in my estimation, that side of the equation is not being addressed. And so I again raise this issue with you. If you truly want to solve the problem, you need to include some sort of provision to have payment for programs to help these people get off of drugs, deal with their alcoholism problem and get back to work. That's all I'm saying. It's a simple concept but it's a very difficult concept because in all of the discussion we have had we have yet to see the sort of initiative we should have. We have, in Senator Hall's committee, stuck there, I believe, a bill by Senator Nelson and I to raise the alcohol tax to put into drug