

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Mr. Chairman, and members of the Legislature, I have to support Senator Wesely's amendment because I think it is realistic and I think it is reasonable. Senator Hefner is right when he says it is a new policy, but what his amendment does, what Senator Hefner's amendment does is to put into the law a new policy with reference to denying benefits to people, and without Senator Hefner's amendment, a class of people who will be denied amendments under his...I meant without his amendment, there is a class of employees, who if they are fired, would continue to receive benefits. With his amendment, you create a new class who no longer will receive benefits. That is a new policy decision that the Legislature is taking at this point. So Senator Wesely's amendment taken in conjunction with Senator Coordsen's earlier provision now gives us a coin that has two sides, and I would hope that the body will accept this. What would happen is if you had a company that chose not to put in place the means by which a person with the drug problem could be helped, the cost to that employer in lieu of such a program would be that the employee would receive unemployment benefits. If the employer wanted to avoid that set of circumstances, he or she could attempt to do what Senator Hefner would do in his work which is try to help the person. Then we don't have to worry about unemployment benefits, we don't have to worry about some of these other things that would arise. So I hope you will accept this. There is one other comment I have to make about the other amendment we just adopted. Prior to this session when Senator Hefner has decided to become kinder and gentler and more reasonable by agreeing with me on some things, C & H formerly only referred to sugar, California and Hawaii. But there is something that can be sweeter than sugar and that is an amendment agreed to by Senator Chambers and Senator Hefner, and while we have such a good thing going, I wish what he would do is look at what Senator Wesely's amendment is going to. It is aimed at trying to assist a person to get into a situation where he or she can get help with a problem and maybe be restored to a position where they could possibly even return to that job which they lost. I think the amendment is reasonable. I don't think it is going to break any fund and I don't think any employer is going to be harmed that much by it. So if it is an amendment that could do immeasurable good and only negligibly inconvenience an employer, I see no reason strong enough to reject it. So I hope that it will be adopted.

SPEAKER BARRETT: The Chair recognizes Senator Coordsen, with