

Senator Wesely on deck.

SENATOR COORDSEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and members of the body. I am trying to puzzle through the amendment a little bit. I understand what Senator Wesely is attempting to accomplish with this, but I have a real problem on the floor of the Legislature trying to visualize in my mind how this impacts the rest of the unemployment compensation statutes with the qualifications for unemployment and the disqualifications from unemployment. I think that Senator Wesely has an idea that needs to be addressed by this body. I think perhaps a better vehicle might be to introduce a bill to do this, go through the hearing process, and allow the input of all of those involved as to how that would impact the total situation of unemployment. I am always a little bit reluctant to come up with a new idea, given the relationship between the federal guidelines, state law in statute, and that we are not, in fact, might face the danger of causing somebody to lose some compensation. So while I might support this type of thing in another arena and another time, I can't today. Thank you.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Senator Wesely.

SENATOR WESELY: Mr. Speaker, I can understand, since this concept has just been hastily drafted and shared with Senator Hefner and Senator Coordsen and others, your reluctance. I think maybe the better course would be for me to do this, to suggest that if we do proceed with the Hefner amendment, that we then look at working on this amendment to it, because in fairness, in fairness, it is not right to expect these individuals to have the resources to pay for the treatment programs that you are suggesting that they go into. It is nice and it is wonderful that we have that option for them to get in a treatment program and maintain their unemployment benefits, but there simply are too few people that can afford the four, five, six thousand dollar cost involved. So what I think may be the course is this, I will probably vote against the Hefner amendment just because of that concern. If it is adopted, and I know we are taking a lot of time on this bill, I think the better thing to do would be to work with Senator Hefner and Senator Coordsen and see about further amendment on Select File. But I warn you that I think it is simply unfair to proceed without this sort of concept being incorporated into the amendments you are contemplating at this time. So I will withdraw this amendment at this time, Mr. Speaker.