

down into the mud and thus, not help with the drug problem, but probably exaggerate the drug problem and make it worse. The employee is thus out of any benefits and without money to support the spouse and the children and what will they do to further their family? They have very few choices. Senator Chambers mentioned, they can turn to crime, turn to selling drugs, it's very possible that it will happen, but it is something we must consider. Do we, as a state, want to take these employees that have a problem and further push them down into the mud by denying them benefits? Senator Wesely's amendment will effectively neutralize the punitive aspect of Senator Hefner's amendment and allow us to study it this year. If, indeed, they are offered drug rehabilitation programs by their employer, then they can go and take those treatments. If they aren't and they can't afford it, we are disqualifying them, cutting off all access to funds and, thus, they go, the spiral continues downward and that is not how we should be addressing the drug and alcohol problem. Again, I would remind you it's an unemployment compensation increase we're looking at. A big change was tacked on by Senator Hefner. Now we have to decide, do we want to do that without looking at it, without studying it this year, or do we want to adopt Senator Wesely's amendment that can help us out, unless we want to completely gut the improper portions of the bill relating to drug testing. That would be proper in my opinion, but if we don't do that, we've done a lot of work on that, let's adopt Senator Wesely's amendment and help to neutralize the bad aspects of the bill that would punish people that are already down, that do have a sickness, a drug problem, and we can help those folks out and help in a very progressive way to help them go through treatment. I'd urge you to adopt Senator Wesely's amendment and urge you to, and the business...ourselves in the Business and Labor Committee to study this issue this summer, and look at the positive direction of helping these people that are in trouble. Thank you.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Senator Coordsen, please.

SENATOR COORDSEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, members of the body, I'd like to back up just a little bit and talk about where we are today in disqualification for unemployment, and bear in mind when we're talking about the use of drugs, although there is disagreement on the floor of the body as to how to classify such use, those activities are illegal. Now, under the current wording of statute relative to unemployment compensation and the