

disqualifications there are, we have those disqualifications that come from misconduct and those that come from gross misconduct. If you are fired from your job because of misconduct and the hearing process determines that to be the disqualification reason or that's the classification of your disqualification, you are disqualified from unemployment for seven to ten weeks. If you are unable to find employment within those seven to ten weeks, then at the end of the disqualification period, and I would add that it averages eight weeks disqualification, that you would be eligible to draw whatever unemployment you had been entitled to for whatever length of time that you're qualified for. I would suggest that gross misconduct is an issue that we're talking about here, and that it's doing things that are basically illegal. Today the odds are pretty good that if you are caught dispersing a controlled substance in the work place or show up for work obviously impaired by use of such a substance, the odds are pretty good that you will, today, be found guilty of gross misconduct and totally disqualified from ever getting any unemployment from that particular employer. Senator Hefner's amendment puts in a definition in the gross misconduct section which defines the refusal to take our legally defined test or failure to pass that test or the distribution or sale of a controlled substance in the workplace as an issue of for total disqualification for unemployment. My amendment to the bill, and I will have a new amendment coming to replace that, that we worked out all of the compliance with the federal and state government. We do something in Nebraska that I don't know of any other state that has done it in that, in effect, we reward a person who has done something illegal and reward is certainly not the right term for that particular set of circumstances, but if they agree to enroll in, participate in and successfully complete a drug treatment program, then we begin to pay them the unemployment as quickly as it is possible, my particular amendment there is a one week disqualification, and after completion of the program, they will continue to receive their unemployment if they successfully complete. That is without this particular amendment. I would suggest that perhaps we are...

SPEAKER BARRETT: One minute.

SENATOR COORDSEN: ...doing something that, taking a step that no other state, to my knowledge, has taken and that we've taken an active step forward in encouraging people to enter treatment