

forth, that we also had to make certain that there was provision for their treatment. And I said I would support legislation in this area whether it be unemployment or whether it be workmen's compensation, whatever it is, as long as there was treatment made available to individuals who had this problem. Now, in my experience as an attorney I've dealt with several of these cases where individuals have been terminated from employment because of drug use, and my experience has been this, that employers deal with drug problems in a variety of ways. Some employers encourage their employees to go into treatment and they provide treatment through facilities in Omaha and pay for that treatment and give employees two, three, even four chances to rehabilitate themselves and these employers should be commended for that, and quite frankly, sometimes these are employees who came to me and were given three and four chances and they were finally terminated. I would say to them, listen, you had three or four chances, your employer really gave you all the chances that, quite frankly, you deserve, and I don't have a whole lot of sympathy for you. But I've seen the other side of the coin too where employees have simply been told, we believe you are on drugs and we're going to terminate your employment tomorrow, and that employee comes to me and says, but my...I have had some drug use in the past but my work performance record is perfect; I've never been written up for anything; I've never done anything other than what I was supposed to do on my job, and if I'm terminated, I have three kids and I'm not going to be able to support those three kids and I'm not going to be able to get along at all, I'm going to have to go on welfare. And I'll tell you, those are real life situations out there. There is inequality of treatment of these employees when there should be across-the-board standardization of treatment. So what we're in effect doing, I commend Senator Coordsen for bringing the concept forward, but as I think he said in his opening statement that he got up to oppose the Wesely amendment with some reservation and I think that's really right. We have an opportunity here to take a system which arises out of the termination of employees for drug use and standardize the way we deal with those people across the state,...

SPEAKER BARRETT: One minute.

SENATOR ASHFORD: ...and if we vote against the Wesely amendment, what we're doing is retaining in place an inequitable system where employees are treated differently depending upon whether or not the employer has the ability to provide a drug