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LB 315

SENATOR MORRISSEY: No, but they get workmen's comp then.

SENATOR HEFNER: Okay. Maybe this should be covered in workmen's comp.

SENATOR MORRISSEY: Possibly maybe that we should do a study and find that out.

SENATOR HEFNER: That is what I am recommending. I'm recommending a study on the Wesely amendment. Thank you, Senator Morrissey. But never before in the history of Nebraska have we allowed unemployment compensation benefits for sickness and that's what this is, it's a sickness, drug use, alcohol use or whatever you call it. Also under the Wesely amendment we would allow them to collect unemployment benefits pronto. They wouldn't even have to wait the seven or ten weeks that we do on some of the others. Under the Wesely amendment they would receive unemployment benefits immediately, and I think that's wrong. Now Senator Coordsen has an amendment coming up a little bit later I believe that would be a little better than the Wesely amendment, but I believe, and in the definition of the unemployment compensation laws it says, a worker shall receive benefits when he loses his job through no fault of his own actions. But I believe when they're under...when they use alcohol or drugs and come to work using them, I believe that is under their own action, and so I would urge you to defeat the Wesely amendment.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Senator Chambers, please.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Mr. Chairman and members of the Legislature, there was a poem that I'm sure all of us either read or know something about where an individual on a ship killed the albatross, and the albatross was hanged around that person's...hung around that person's neck and they lost their wind, they didn't have water to drink and problems developed because somebody had slain the albatross. Now this bill is becoming like an albatross. It started out in a viable condition and its purpose was to benefit people who found it necessary to be in a position to draw unemployment compensation. The bill has now become an instrumentality to punish sick people, to deny them benefits to which they would not be denied without this bill. I had supported this bill, I've supported similar bills every time they have come before this Legislature.