

there's Senator Hefner. I didn't see you behind the pillar. Would you answer a question, please. I saw him as he was making for the door. Senator Hefner, I would like to ask you the same two question I asked Senator Coordsen. Do you see drug addiction as being a sickness.

SENATOR HEFNER: Senator Chambers, that's a good question. That's the \$64 question. When I asked Senator Morrissey, I says, if you say we should pay unemployment benefits for this that you call a sickness, drug abuse or alcohol abuse, should we pay unemployment benefits for like pneumonia?

SENATOR CHAMBERS: But let's take it a step at a time with the questions that I'm asking so we can get to what you talked to Senator Morrissey about. Do you see drug addiction as being a sickness?

SENATOR HEFNER: I really can't say that I feel it is a sickness. I suppose you could call it a sickness.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: All right, if we call it a sickness, can you tell me any other sickness which is defined in statute as gross misconduct for which a person can be fired? Is there any other sickness? No.

SENATOR HEFNER: We don't...Senator Chambers, we don't pay unemployment benefits for any sickness.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Right, Senator Hefner, thank you very much...

SENATOR HEFNER: And neither does any other state.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: My time is running out.

SENATOR HEFNER: Okay.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Here is the point that I'm making. Senator Hefner asks should there be unemployment compensation paid for somebody with pneumonia. A person with pneumonia is not defined as a person engaging in gross misconduct. This bill defines drug addiction as gross misconduct. It doesn't treat it as a sickness. It treats it as misconduct for which a person can be fired. If a person were relieved of his or her job because of ill health, then that's a type of disability, and as was pointed out, they would get workers' compensation, sickness benefits.