

SENATOR LYNCH: Mr. Speaker and members, I'd like to offer a suggestion as a resolution to the problem we face now. Just like Senator Kristensen, I have great respect for the experience and wisdom of Senator Coordsen and the fact that he and this committee recognized the need for this increase in unemployment benefits. I'm not quite sure what kind of politics takes place regarding the amendment and why it was put on or not put on, why it was amended or not amended. But it is a shame that what we originally began and discussed and in fact agreed to after great debate regarding the unemployment benefits should now be in possible jeopardy because of the amendments regarding the drug testing bill. We now have in place, as you all know, a drug testing program. Seems to be working. There have been people suggested it be changed or amended, but it's not too bad the way it exists, and it's obviously fair. There are some federal laws that could even supersede what we do in the state regarding drug testing and qualification for, in fact, unemployment. I talked to Senator Bernard-Stevens, who is next up and who was involved, obviously, with the amendment and the drug testing proposal. He would be willing to ask your permission to substitute his amendment for mine, which is the last of all the amendments which is on that long litany of proposals, which simply does, in a sense, what Senator Hall just related to. It just removes any language that was added, except for that which was all agreed to and negotiated for in originally...as originally defined in 315 regarding the unemployment compensation increase, period, no more, no less. So, Senator Coordsen, I would again ask...and what you did...and I appreciate that very much, is stand up by offering your bracket motion and point out to us the alternatives we have, given the time left in the session, how much of that do we want to spend on this particular bill, is whatever politics may be involved from the labor side, from the business side, or whatever side, worth jeopardizing the unemployment increase? I don't think it is and I don't really think Senator Coordsen does either. And he pointed out to us the alternatives we have. So I suggest we could do two things, either vote down the Coordsen amendment to bracket to give Senator Bernard-Stevens, who will be up next and offer my amendment which was the last one, simply strike everything except the bill originally contained in 315, or, if it would be permissible to Senator Coordsen, just ask Senator Coordsen to withdraw his bracket motion and go to the amendment by Bernard-Stevens, after which, if we're not satisfied, then offer the bracket motion again, which I would support. Thank you.