

you.

SENATOR WESELY: Okay.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Smith. Senator Wesely.

SENATOR WESELY: Yes, I'd like to address...Senator Lynch had a question about treating health professionals easier than the general public. I want to again emphasize that this bill is different than the previous bills that came in and it is true that they would have gone easier on health professionals than others. That is not the case with this legislation. There are two tracks here. One track allows what could be termed an employee assistance program to assist individuals to deal with their drug and alcohol problems, if that route is so chosen by the individual or by those that are reporting them. But if a person reporting says, look, this guy is a real problem, we've got to deal with him; we've got...the full law enforcement abilities are always going to be there, the ability to move in and discipline and take away licenses are always going to be there, they are not removed by this bill. Everything stays in place as it now is. The only thing is we have one other option out there that doesn't preclude any other options and we need to have it because it could effectively deal with a lot of these problems. So I want to try and emphasize that it's not the same bill that we've had in the past. It is a different approach that has met with broad-based support. And...Senator Morrissey isn't here, but I'll find that exact...I still haven't found that exact language, but I want to reemphasize again that those that are reporting have a standard at which to meet, that there is some reasonableness in their reporting an individual, that they're not just doing it to harass or hurt somebody. It would not be allowed under the statute.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Wesely. Is there anyone else who wishes to speak to this bill? Seeing none, do you have closing, Senator Wesely?

SENATOR WESELY: Thank you. I'd like to ask again to advance the bill. It would move us forward in a dramatic fashion to better discipline health professionals in a broad sense and in a specific sense of alcohol and drugs. We have a problem here, we need to address it and a lot of work has went into this legislation. I'd appreciate support for advancement of the bill.