

funding source for CHIPS. I support the amendment, I'm a cosponsor of the amendment, but it's not because I don't support the CHIPS program, nor a permanent funding program. I think both of those are extremely important that we find those. But I think this amendment is not going to harm that position. I think it's...the amendment is a fair statement of policy by the state, for the time being, and I think that it ought to be adopted.

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Lindsay. Senator Landis.

SENATOR LANDIS: I'd promised to do only one talk. I'll make two points, then I'll sit down quickly so we can get on to a vote. John raises an excellent point, and that is, look, holding people's feet to the fire who are in an unequitable situation really isn't legitimate, we ought to let them off the hook. I ask you whether or not the insurance companies' position of bearing a responsibility is, in fact, unequitable. I don't think it is. And it's not unequitable for health insurance companies because they are the chief beneficiaries of the Comprehensive Health Insurance Pool. What they get to do is they get to continue to write the healthiest people as parts of pools that they do underwrite, and they get to move unhealthy people into a state sponsored program. Who benefits? Certainly the CHIP policyholders, but so, too, do the insurance companies who get to continue to offer attractive pools, with healthy people in them, at lower rates, because they've moved the sick people out and into CHIP. Insurance companies get a very real benefit out of the existence of CHIP. To conclude that they have an unequitable responsibility in funding it seems to me a leap of faith I'm not prepared to make. They are primary beneficiaries of the existence of CHIP. Lastly, there may not be those of you who are convinced of the rectitude of this position, as I am, to vote no. I would simply...I would simply ask you if you do not, if you're not convinced of the rectitude of the position, simply not vote on the adoption of the amendment, or the adoption of the bill to the next stage.

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Landis. Senator Robinson. Anyone else wishing to speak to the amendment by Senator Abboud? Seeing no one, Senator Abboud, do you wish to close?

SENATOR ABOUD: Well, Mr. President, colleagues, we've had a pretty clear discussion about what the amendment is about. Senator Wesely, when he first brought this bill to the body's