

in support of them.

**PRESIDENT MOUL:** Thank you, Senator Wesely. Does anyone else wish to address the committee amendments? Seeing none, do you have closing, Senator Coordsen? Closing is waived. We'll now vote on the committee amendments to LB 145. All those in favor please vote aye, opposed nay. Have you all voted on the committee amendments? Please record, Mr. Clerk.

**CLERK:** 25 ayes, 0 nays, Madam President, on adoption of the committee amendments.

**PRESIDENT MOUL:** The committee amendments are adopted. I'll recognize Senator Wesely for opening.

**SENATOR WESELY:** Thank you, Madam President, members, I really appreciate the chance to open on LB 145, appreciate the Business and Labor Committee's desire to have it advanced out of committee and having the chance to bring this issue to the floor of the Legislature. Family medical leave is an issue that has been before our nation for a number of years. Congress has several times now passed legislation to establish a federal Medical Family Leave Act, has been vetoed by the President, is now pending further action after having passed both the House and Senate last fall. But every indication is that though the federal initiative has been successful in the Congress that at this point the President continues to oppose that and will veto it and there are not enough votes to override. So it looks to me like the family medical leave issue is really, at least at this point, back in the hands of the states and a number of states have taken action in this area. Fifteen states have adopted some form of parental leave, another 15 states have further types of leave policies that they have adopted. So somewhere between 15 and 30 states have already taken a step forward in this area and I am hoping that today we can advance LB 145 and take at least a first step forward we can advance Nebraska joining these other states to try and provide some type of leave for our families in our state. What has happened to our state and our society is a change over time of the work force. We no longer have the situation of the father of the family going out in the work place, having a job that pays well with excellent benefits and being able to sustain the family to the degree they'd like to, having the mother stay at home with the children and that idyllic lifestyle, though it was the one I grew up with, isn't very frequently found today in our modern society.