

brief period of time to help as well. And there are other options that are there, other workers picking up the load even without bonuses, et cetera, et cetera. But one way or the other this company and others as well have found ways to use the unpaid leave to retain their good workers and save money for the company and have a more positive attitude by their workers, knowing that if they are in great need of time to take care of their family, they will be able to have that time. A lot of people are concerned in the business community about abuse. What about abuse of this? Well I think there will always be situations where any benefit might be abused by some, but when it's unpaid leave I certainly don't feel that you'll find very many people taking advantage of that situation. In my own company at Lincoln Telephone, till you've worked there for five years you have a first day of sick leave is unpaid and then after that you have paid leave after a number of years of service there and we do find a differential between those people that will go on sick leave when it's unpaid versus those that will use it when it is paid. There is a difference. If I was here proposing paid family medical leave, I'd expect strong opposition from the business community and they'd probably be right to do so, but that's a benefit that perhaps at this point in time needs to be negotiated obviously company by company. But we're talking here about a minimum protection for individuals on an unpaid basis so if they've got a father or a mother they have to go take care of or they have a child or themselves that are sick, they can go and take care of that family need and not worry about their job being gone when they come back and are able to work again. That's what we're really talking about here. We're talking about families, about human beings that have a different...

PRESIDENT MOUL: One minute.

SENATOR WESELY: ...situation, different role to play now than they did years when I was a young child growing up and was able to have my mother stay home full time, not that long ago, but maybe long in some people's view but times have changed in that period of time. We've got to recognize the need for change and this policy I think is a very important step forward and I very much would appreciate support for the bill. I'd be happy to answer questions and hope that you've had a chance to look at some of the materials and will be able to look favorably on this legislation. Thank you, Madam President.