

SENATOR MORRISSEY: ...won't remain even. And if this causes him to reduce benefits to certain employees, what else could cause him to reduce benefits to certain employees later in the future? I think it's good policy for the state to take, and it will be good for business, and it will be good for those employees that are really strapped, financially, most of our constituents out there that are struggling to get by and save just a little bit of money. And I don't even know if they can think, these young parents, anymore of sending their kids to college. It's really, really a worry, it's really bothersome. And I think this is just one thing that will...that will help employees and the businesses of the state, and make our business climate more attractive.

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Morrissey. Senator Robinson, you're next. Senator Withem.

SENATOR WITHEM: Just very briefly, Mr. Speaker. I am rising in support of the Bernard-Stevens amendment for reasons that...that are...that, well I think, I think will put the bill in a position in which I can support it. I think one of the problems that I see with LB 145, as it is currently written, it's an example of what we are doing in government, that is we're passing...we see a massive problem out in society, a problem that is really beyond our control of government to impact upon, and we pass a piece of legislation so we can go back to our constituents and claim that, yes, we've solved this particular problem. And I think dumping this responsibility back onto business is not necessarily the correct way to go. But leading by example, saying as state government we are going to treat our employees in a manner in which we would like to see everyone...every other employees...other employees handled, does make a lot of sense. I think we in government have an obligation to...to deal with what goes on in our own house, before we start mandating that onto other segments of our economy. And I think that's what Senator Bernard-Stevens' amendment does, it says that we will treat state employees in the fashion that LB 145 implies that they should be, but we'll still leave it up to individual businesses, individual labor unions to negotiate with businesses what their benefit package should be. So I think what Senator Bernard-Stevens is offering here is, frankly, very constructive toward passing the bill, and probably is more constructive toward achieving family leave policies in the state than leaving LB 145 in its current form,