

benefits in 1974 and the ADA just a couple years ago, in 1990, stopped the discrimination of employment dealing with people with disabilities. The point I'm trying to make is that the imposition of standards and protections for the public has been something that we have responded to over the years. As we have recognized the need, we have tried to respond and provide for protection to the public in the workplace. Employers have not always liked to see these changes. They have been an infringement in some ways but thank God for them because they have protected people when they should be protected. And now we stand before you asking for the next step in trying to protect families, trying to protect the sick and the ill, those with disabilities, those suffering from Alzheimer's, those suffering from other types of health debilitating diseases and injuries so that they may have time to take care of their health, to take care of the health of their children, or their parents, to bring into this world children either through birth or adoption and have time to spend with them so that they might have a warm welcome and ability to bond with their parents in this new world and new life. These are the expectations and goals of LB 145. I have talked before about the studies that have indicated that the cost involved, because it's unpaid leave without benefits, that the cost is not going to be there for employers, that they can manage it. In other states that they have had it, in fact, they have found a savings to employers, that we found the implementation of these proposals in other states that have this has not been a problem for the vast majority of employers, that this bill only affects 2 percent of the employers in this state but close to about 45 percent of the employees, and is a first step to try to recognize the need to protect our families and our employees from having to choose between family and a family member that's sick or their own health and the potential of losing their own job, and their livelihood. And, in my view, this is a very important step that needs to be taken and I would ask your support for the bill. Again be happy to answer questions and hope that we can fairly quickly come to a vote on this legislation without too much further amendment or discussion. And, with that, I would close on my opening, Madam President.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Wesely. Senator Nelson.
Senator Crosby.

SENATOR CROSBY: Thank you, Madam President, and members. Thank you, Don, for your introduction to the bill. As I said last