

SENATOR HEFNER: Okay. Thank you. I oppose this amendment and the reason I oppose it is because I think this should be done through negotiations. I realize that this is just for state employees but nevertheless in the end it's certainly going to cost more money. And so I think we need to be mindful of that. In regards to the original bill, if you read your committee statement, you will find that I voted against advancing this bill and I wanted to tell you just a few reasons why I did this. I feel that a lot of employers or most employers are doing this now and I realize this bill just covers those employers that hire over 100 employees. But I don't think that now is the time to strangle these employers with...with more regulation. In fact, when I have been talking to some of these businesses, they say, why don't you get government off of our backs instead of adding more on? We're...we're just strangling with government regulations and it seems like each year here in the State Legislature and also on the federal level there is more laws being enacted that restrict employers from doing some of these things. I think we also need to consider the cost. And I know Senator Wesely says, well, there's not going to be any cost to this because they will be taking this family leave without any wages or without any salaries. But I want you to consider the cost of finding these employees to replace those that are on family leave. How about the time that it takes to interview these? And how about the time it takes to train a new employee? And so there's going to be added insurance. How about unemployment compensation benefits? How about health insurance benefits? And I could go on and on. And so I think we need to consider these things. Many employers work with their employees when they have a problem. And I have heard from time to time and I know in our businesses we certainly will work with an employee if they have trouble. If they need to take some time off, well, we'll certainly work with them on them. Also, good employees are hard to find and so most of the employers will treat their employees very fairly. But getting back to the public hearing, there was a lot of...a lot of those that opposed the bill and I don't want to go into that now, but probably will later. Also, I realize this bill is only for those over...

PRESIDENT MOUL: One minute.

SENATOR HEFNER: ...100 employees, but what happens next year? What happens two years or five years? Pretty soon it will drop to 50, then it will drop to 25, and then 10 and pretty soon it