

able to take care of their family medical needs and not lose their job. I just don't know that we can take the step that Senator Bernard-Stevens is offering. And Senator Hefner asked some questions about the cost and how much cost there is in recruiting workers. Let me just respond to that. The NFIB did a study and out of the businesses that are affected by leave policies in other states, only 35 percent ended up using temporary workers. So two-thirds of the businesses responded to people taking leave time by simply absorbing the workload, spreading the workload and not bringing on anybody else in that short period of time that the people are gone. For 35 percent, they did have to take the step of bringing in a temporary worker. But the training and recruitment there is certainly no match for the cost of training and recruitment for somebody on a more permanent basis. And if you didn't have leave and those people left your job and the experience that they had gained and the skill level that they had gained would be lost and it would take quite a bit of time to take these new replacement workers and train and recruit and give them the same skill level and so, ultimately, I don't think you can make the argument that there is that cost because if you lose employees and have to replace them, there is a much greater cost in giving them the leave time and either spreading the workload among existing employees or, if you have to, take on temporary employees to get through that period of time. So, again, I do support the concept of Senator Bernard-Stevens' proposal but I would ask you to vote against the amendment at this point and allow us a chance to vote on LB 145 up or down in its current form. Thank you.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Wesely. Senator Warner.

SENATOR WARNER: Madam President and members of the Legislature, I would very...I would rise to strongly oppose the amendment. It doesn't deal at all with the basic issue of family leave. But the first step, if it is done, of the intrusion, as someone had already mentioned, with the intrusion of the collective bargaining process that the Legislature approved for state employees, LB 661, the only thing that was restricted in that law from bargaining dealt with retirement and in the basic issue also that's in the general bargaining...collective bargaining law of what is defined as management issues, before we once start the track of beginning to through legislation affect those items that otherwise would be negotiable, in the long run what it will result in is both the state and the state employees attempting to restrict some of those bargaining rights that they