

country, we're going to do it. But I haven't seen any proof of that. I would urge you to support the bill as Senator Wesely brought it. Thank you.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Morrissey. Senator Withem, followed by Senator Bernard-Stevens.

SENATOR WITHEM: Yes, Madam President and members of the body, I commend Senator Bernard-Stevens. A lot of times on a controversial bill where two sides are battling one another, what it takes is somebody kind of running up the middle and uniting those sides. And Senator Bernard-Stevens has done this. Both sides agree they hate his amendment and he's to be commended for that action. (Laughter.) And, foolishly, I see these two sides shooting at one another, have now decided to shoot at the peacemaker and I'm going to ride right into the middle and say, let me help you, peacemaker, so everybody can come shooting at me also. But I think Senator Bernard-Stevens has a good idea and I would point out the reason I decided to enter into the discussion here was when Senator Warner and Senator Moore started talking about the evils of the Bernard-Stevens amendment and how it violates the collective bargaining process and all of those other things. And I would invite them to read the bill, the provision on page 2, the bottom of page 2, top of page 3 of the green copy, the bill already includes the State of Nebraska having to provide this provision. The Bernard-Stevens amendment does not add any new provisions onto the bill that were not already there. The Bernard-Stevens amendment is not adding a responsibility of the state to provide this parental leave beyond what is already in the bill because the state, including the executive legislative judicial branches and any state department or agency that employs any employees are contained under the definition of what an employer shall mean. So they are already in the bill. What Senator Bernard-Stevens' amendment is doing, it is limiting its application to only the state. And I think that has some public policy benefits to it. As I said the other day, I think that too often in government when we don't have the funds or the finances or the wherewithal or whatever else it takes to introduce legislation and pass legislation that benefits a group of people, we pass that responsibility on over to business to provide that responsibility. In some cases it may not be a bad idea. In some of the laundry list that has been mentioned, child labor laws, minimum wage laws, all of those other things do, in fact, make sense. But this is one I really question