

majority of this body has already made. Similar decisions are going to have to be made on welfare reform and in the budget, and like I said before, it makes me nervous that those decisions again will go unsaid and we will just turn again and raise taxes. Thank you.

SPEAKER WITHEM: Senator Wesely, followed by Senator Pirsch.

SENATOR WESELY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, members of the Legislature. I rise in opposition to the Pirsch amendment, and I understand we're about...she is about to close on it, so I just want to briefly say that I hope you will vote against the Pirsch amendment as well. I did have an amendment pending to it to take us not from 150 percent down to 133 percent, which is what her amendment does, but to go a different direction and take us up to 185 percent of poverty. Now this Legislature is built on compromise. It attempts to take different viewpoints and bring them together. I have a very different viewpoint on what I think we ought to do in terms of health care and assistance to the poor than Senator Pirsch and Senator Witek do. I think we have cut back and not provided adequate health care for our poor, particularly in prenatal care. So I would like to see us do more, and this Legislature three times previously has passed legislation to go to 185 percent of poverty. This Legislature has recognized that problem, recognized the benefit to the state...

SPEAKER WITHEM: (Gavel) Members, I can't hear the speaker. I don't know if others can either. I'd appreciate attention. At least, if you have conversations, take them off the floor, please.

SENATOR WESELY: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Three times previously this Legislature has passed bills to take us to 185 percent of poverty for prenatal care. Governor Kerrey, Governor Orr, and Governor Nelson, each, have had the privilege of vetoing those bills, but this Legislature has stood tall and strong on behalf of individuals that are low income, who needed that prenatal care, and I have been proud of this Legislature. For us to take a different direction now, and not even go to 150 percent, to me, would be a travesty. I know you won't. I know you will vote against the Pirsch amendment because, again, this is an attempt to compromise. I would rather be at 185 percent. I accepted 150 percent. We had previously talked about not having any cash payments until the birth of a child. We decided not to