

you know, I was just thinking, I jump into these bills and seem to be critical of a number of things but I just wanted to say this bill is excellent, I think, in terms of combining a number of sections of statutes and clarifying and doing a whole lot of good things, and I just wanted to indicate that I was very supportive of the general effort. And I wanted to give back the rest of my time to Senator Schimek, if she would like to have it, please.

SENATOR CROSBY: Thank you, Senator Beutler. Senator Schimek.

SENATOR SCHIMEK: Thank you, Madam President, members of the body. Thank you, Senator Beutler. I had my light on originally to rise in support of the committee amendments and I would like to make a comment or two about them, but before I do I would like to also offer my support for the Chambers amendment. I sat on the Business and Labor Committee both years when that bill was heard or when similar bills were heard, at least, and last year, I believe, a bill did get out of committee. This year it failed by one vote and was killed. So I do think it is an issue that is relevant, has great importance and perhaps even some urgency. And so I hope that we are going to have a serious discussion about this issue. Back to the committee amendments, and I, too, would like to echo some of what Senator Wesely said earlier about wanting to strengthen the NEOC. I think that it is something that I would not like to see us bury and I was...I was somewhat maybe skeptical about putting it under the Department of Labor, so I'm pleased with the way this has been amended. And I also think that it has done a lot of good service for us over the years. But, having said that, Senator Warner, I have just a couple of questions and one involves the...

SENATOR CROSBY: Senator Warner.

SENATOR SCHIMEK: ...the first question involves the tier system and this is very attractive to me. I think this is one of the greatest strengths of the committee amendment and the bill because I think that it will help the people that we're trying to serve with NEOC and I think it will also help the NEOC with its process. But, as I understand it from the bill, there will be a kind of a preliminary investigation, a tier one investigation and, from my understanding of the agency, oftentimes this has been something that hasn't been accomplished and they've gone ahead and investigated cases that they really