

was hoping would be part of this big amendment, but it didn't turn out that way, because I think we have an obligation to take care of those children, whether the mother breaks the contract or not. So I am going to support Senator Dierks' amendment and I hope that many of you will, because I think it will resolve a couple of things in this bill that will help me. In the end maybe I can support it. But as long as we have this and no leeway for the caseworker, I still feel that we're on a path that isn't going to do what we think it will in the long run. Senator Chambers, if I have any time, you may go on with your reading.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Senator Chambers.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: How much time do I have?

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: About two and a half minutes.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Thank you. I'm continuing with the article. Let's look at the welfare program for what it is, not what it's not. It is a program to provide the necessities of life to poor children, and it does just that. It helps enumerable abandoned wives and young widows through the adjustment period before they can find work or marry again. It helps feed children while their mothers go to college or get other training so that they can earn a better living. To put it bluntly, it keeps hungry children from begging on our streets. Measured by how well it does what it has been designed to do, the welfare program is a success. There's a wide spread feeling that this program is too costly. Actually, the cost is minor, depending on how you figure it, probably less than 1 percent of our national budget. We spend as much on prison construction and maintenance. If as a nation we cannot spend 1 percent to feed hungry children, we are in a sorry fix. Perhaps the program can be revised to broaden its goals and to help meet other societal problems. That won't be cheap, it won't save enough money to pay for a tax cut for the people who are not needy, and those revisions won't be easy to figure out. The nation has been working on the problems of low wages, unemployment, access to health care and the problems of the inner cities for a long time. We hand to our government our most difficult problems, and then we spend on those problems only minor amounts of our tax...

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: One minute.