

symbols though, in terms of what the Legislature is doing with welfare reform, this is a critical vote. It sends the message back to the public that we're...we've heard their concerns and Senator Maurstad may think that they're not very serious, that if you talk to them, they will change their mind, but I think that may happen to some degree. On the other hand, they also know it concerns them and what they're worried about, what they would like to see changed and this is definitely one of those key issues. It's probably more symbolic than it is in substance because the money you're talking about isn't that big, but symbols are important. They send messages back, not just to the recipients of welfare but to the taxpayers out there as well. It's critical that we recognize that we've heard their concerns, that we're responding to them. We are not harming the children, in my view. We continue to have the child care. We continue to have the medical care. We continue to have the food stamps. We even provide that if they're getting child support, they get increased child support collections and that's not penalized against them. I think we've done everything but give them the cash under this and the cap is only dealing with cash. I don't think that's unreasonable. I think it's not unfair and I don't think it will harm the children. But the symbol is there for those who are pushing hard to see this removed and I hope that on the other side that the public is being heard as well that's concerned about this and that we'll retain the family cap. I don't know how much more to argue. We went over it time and again, you have your opinions set, but I hope you will think very carefully when you go back. And, again, Senator Maurstad pooh-poohed this but let me tell you that one of the lessons I got when I first came down here is whenever you vote, think about how you go back to your district and stand before your constituents and they ask you, now why did you vote to continue to provide additional cash payments if you have additional children once you're on welfare? And if you feel strongly and you can answer that then, obviously, go ahead and vote to get rid of the cap. But I think I can feel just as strongly and argue just as adamantly and convincingly and I think the public will be there as well that we ought not to continue that practice, that we ought to send the message back that we are providing assistance to the child in the number of fashions in terms of the cash, after you sign the contract, after you agree with the conditions that from there forward you ought not to have additional cash payments for additional children. So, with that, again I ask you to reject the motion to reconsider and let's move forward with some other aspects of the bill. Thank