

clarify that point. But my point is that I don't think it's symbolic. I think it's very real to a lot of people that \$71 a month is a great deal of money and they don't understand why we would do this. And I'll give the balance of my time to Senator Beutler.

SENATOR WILL: Senator Beutler, you have approximately two and a half minutes.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Senator, thank you. I just wanted to make a couple of small points and I think respond and ask Senator Maurstad to consider his thoughts on the matter. He's always been very thoughtful on this floor on everything that's passed, but his point is that this is symbolic and therefore we should not do it, that we're going to be deceiving people somehow. But I think that he has surely learned by now in this body that when there are major shifts of policy ordinarily it doesn't happen all at once. Ordinarily, it happens in little bits and pieces, the direction shifts. If it's working, it gains momentum and on we go. This is a little shift. It's taking away the cash payment. It's not taking away the food stamps. It's not taking away the medical help. It's a small step but in a different direction, and we do not want to go faster. We do not want to go faster, one, because politically you can't even do it, as evidenced by what's happening today, but, two, I think everybody wants to see whether it will serve as a kind of incentive. Let's see what the result is of the small step. But it's very real. It is symbolic but it's also very real and the public is looking to see in which direction are we going. Now Senator Hall says...and I have always appreciated his generosity of spirit, but he says the middle class is willing...

SENATOR WILL: One minute.

SENATOR BEUTLER: ...to pay for the poor. I submit to you, Senator Hall, that the reason in a broader political sense that the entire welfare system is in trouble today is because support is eroding in the middle class, and the middle class is going to the upper class to protect itself against the welfare system. That's really what's happening in this country. And if you care about the welfare system and if you want to help people, you've got to make the welfare system better and you've got to reestablish the credibility of the welfare system with the middle class, and if you adopt this amendment, you're not doing that.