

that they take those that are desperate, nowhere else to turn to, and the counties have been there to help them. The sort of restrictions that are being placed on people to qualify for county general assistance is extreme and they have to have very few assets, next to no income, and then finally the counties will help. It's not a luxury effort whatsoever but it's always been there for everybody who, again, that's it, there's no place...the federal government, the state government, no place else, then the counties, only then do the counties step in and provide assistance. So it seems to me that that system that we've had now for the history of the state, basically, since we formed and the counties were formed, the role of counties, ought not to have been changed at this time, that...that the other approach to the whole situation would have been to maintain the status of things and to see what kind of impact the counties had and then react to it, I mean, this is anticipating a problem and...and...and instead of waiting to see how severe the problem is and responding to it, we're...we're anticipating a big problem, it may or may not be a big problem. I'm guessing as well, I don't know. But, in my view, it seems to me that...

SPEAKER WITHEM: One minute.

SENATOR WESELY: ...again, we took a major step with the cut-off from the state, but people that, through no fault of their own, lose their benefits and then come upon desperate times will now have no place else to turn to, so I...I really think that we should think about this more carefully. And I would ask your support for the Chambers amendment. Thank you.

SPEAKER WITHEM: Senator Vrtiska, followed by Senators Abboud, Will, Chambers and Wehrbein.

SENATOR VRTISKA: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and members of the body, I would be less than honest if I didn't tell you that I would have to oppose, vigorously oppose this amendment. As you know, we send out a message supposedly through all of the process we've gone through, through the day, we send out a message that people either have to meet certain requirements or they're cut off, and when we get through with that we say, well, if you...if everybody else cuts you off, well, you go down to the county and they'll take care of you. The problem you've got is you look at a lot of the counties and where their mill levies are sitting at, or their levies are sitting at, they don't have the money to do it either but yet you're saying it's their