

status, age, national origin or sexual orientation. Denying equal opportunity in employment because of these factors that I've mentioned is contrary to the principles of freedom, and is a burden on the objectives of the public policy of this state. The policy of this state does not require any person to employ an application for employment because of these factors. And the policy of this state does not require any employer, employment agency, labor organization, or joint labor management committee to grant preferential treatment to any individual based on these factors. What we see here in the language that I've read is an articulation of a principle that underlines...underlies and is central to any decent policy of social justice. Work can liberate in many respects. In this amendment that I'm offering, the state will be saying that because of a person's perceived sexual orientation the right to earn a living in an honest pursuit will not be denied. If a person had been convicted of the most heinous crime, has served his or her time in the penitentiary and is released, that person has a right to work, has a right to earn a living. When I was at Creighton, a school run by the Jesuits, there was always a discussion about the right of an individual to the means to earn what it takes to support himself, herself and family members. For this state to turn its view away from what we know is happening is inexcusable. The fact that an amendment such as this creates so much agony on the part of some of the senators, underscores the seriousness of the problem that it seeks to address, were we not faced with an active, ongoing type of discrimination in the realm of employment against people because of their perceived sexual orientation, and currently they can be denied employment or fired because of a perception rather than a reality, the fact that this amendment creates...

SPEAKER WITHEM: One minute.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: ...so much alarm, establishes the existence of the discrimination that the amendment seeks to overcome. I hope that you will give some serious thought to this amendment. I hope when time comes to vote you will cast a vote in favor of it. And as we proceed, I will go into more specifics on the amendment itself.

SPEAKER WITHEM: Thank you, Senator Chambers. For discussion on the Chambers amendment, 2429, to the committee amendment, Senator Warner.