

my power in a way that's gentle, in accord with the way I say we should enact legislation. But in reality, this is one of those areas which I would look at, in a sense, as being the bottom of the barrel for people who are trying to get work. If homosexuals are in the bottom of the barrel, and if we raise the bottom of the barrel, we raise everything that's in it. All that can be done for society is to improve it. If we would at least, in the area of employment, adopt a policy, as the Legislature has done, as the university system has done, as all of the larger companies have done, and say that because of sexual orientation a person is not going to be deprived of the opportunity to earn a living. A person is not going to be denied employment, once employment is obtained that person is not going to be treated in an unfair way in the workplace, he or she will not be prevented from obtaining promotions. And we will see that with the broadening of the scope of Nebraskans by enacting into law a policy of this kind there will be improvements that will reverberate throughout the system. A tremendous fear will automatically dissipate. Many things, once they become accomplished facts, lose all of their power to cause fear and stress. The stress was created because people had difficulty coming to grips with the issue. But once we come to grips with it, once we prohibit this discrimination and it...

PRESIDENT ROBAK: One minute.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: ...it would apply to employers employing 15 people or more, so when people talk about a small, mom and pop, operation, or some religious book store, those are all exempted. And furthermore, there is a specific exemption for all religious operations and those activities associated, or businesses, or proceedings associated with religion, they're out of it altogether. So if their religion is not broad enough to encompass all people or include all people in the human family, let that be a matter for their religion and their God, who is as narrow-minded as they are. But for the rest of us, we would do what we can to ensure that people who want to work have the opportunity to do so, and all of these false and phoney reasons for denying them opportunity will be done away with. Since there has been an unwillingness on the part of other legislators to discuss this issue, all can run home and say...

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Time. Thank you, Senator Chambers. Senator Chambers, to close on his amendment.