

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office

March 1, 2000

LB 953

money available from which these benefits will be drawn, so I'm in support of these amendments. And although I'm going to be...

SENATOR CUDABACK: Time.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: ...kind of going after Senator Vrtiska for one reason or another, I've got to give him credit for having done things of value before his ignominious fall.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Thank you, Senator Chambers. Senator Beutler, on the Vrtiska amendment to LB 953.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Senator Cudaback, members of the Legislature, I'm not so sure this is a good bill. In fact, I'm not so sure it doesn't set an unhappy precedent. The bill probably, in terms of its financial totality, is so small that perhaps one should just not worry about it, but let me tell you what my questions are. First of all, this fund has traditionally, as I understand it anyway, been a kind of arbitrator of a relationship between an employer and an employee, and in cases where the employer was the cause of the employee leaving then it provides for compensation to the employee. On the other hand, if it wasn't the employer's fault that the employee left, there is no compensation. Now I don't know enough about this to say that this is for the very first time, but this is certainly a rare instance, if not the only instance, where the cause of the employee leaving is not the employer but compensation is being made out of the fund. Abuse, of course, is something that we all feel strongly about and that word, in and of itself, causes us to think favorably about a bill like this from the very beginning, but there are other kinds of causes that are not employee caused kinds of things that one might argue are like abuse in the sense that they are not the employee's fault. For example, if the employee's spouse gets a job in California and the employee leaves with the spouse to preserve the family, obviously, not the employee's fault, should there be compensation out of this fund to compensate that employee? Senator Chambers I think is...is on to a good point when he says the employer's specific account is not charged because it's not the employer's fault, but the general broader account of employer funds in that same fund is charged. So my question would be, if this is a social cost for which we want to