

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

February 9, 2004 LB 1049

I'll grant you that my constituent is...I've known her for quite some time. She might...one might say, is a little obstinate but, by all accounts, was there at work, did her job, but had a personality conflict with the management. She was terminated because of misconduct, even though they wouldn't define exactly what she had done, and I worked with them. And there was actually...there was not any working with me on behalf of the county and I'm embarrassed to say that I could not stop them from terminating her. Fast forward on, she was unable to qualify for unemployment benefits for, I think it was, ten weeks. And she, again, has a high school education, 50-some-year-old woman, and our economy right now is not good. You look at the number of people that applied for those...

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.

SENATOR BOURNE: ...jobs at that new hotel in Omaha; 1,300 people applied for jobs in Omaha. Anyway, making a long story of this, my constituent couldn't find a job, still hasn't to this day. And in the meantime, she is unable to pay her bills. She is in arrears on her rent, and she is married, has several grown kids. She is in arrears on her bills. She has a shutoff notice from some of the utilities. And I will say the utilities have worked very well with her trying to get this resolved. My point is this, is that I understand exactly what Senator Cunningham is doing, but I'm wondering if surely he can see my constituent's problem and my problem with a thing like this when my constituent is calling me, practically crying, saying, hey, I'm going to lose my rental house, I'm going to lose my utilities, you know, shutting off the electricity and the heat. I'm concerned and I'm wondering if she wasn't able to qualify for benefits after seven, eight, or ten weeks, if they extended that for another month, I'm not sure she could have held on and stayed in her home.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Time.

SENATOR BOURNE: So, while I understand what you're doing, I'm concerned.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Bourne. Senator Aguilar.