

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

February 10, 2004 LB 1049

Beutler, as an example, talked about the low rates that we pay our people. We're never going to pay higher rates if we don't get this thing under control. We have to get it under control. Unemployment rates have gone up. They're going to raise another \$36 million this year. This bill addresses \$4.5 million of that. But \$36 million, and we need to get that under control. Senator Chambers, you talk about how cruel we are, and how I'm going to go to hell. Well, I will tell you that the people I'm dealing with are people that quit on their own free will, without good cause. And why should they collect unemployment insurance? Or they're fired for misconduct. And you maybe didn't hear some of the reasons. One place wrote to me, and here's what they said. They had an employee observed handling a resident inappropriately. This was in a nursing home. And they were terminated...they terminated her from her position. But under State Department of HHS rules, that administrator, if he does not remove that employee, he can have his license suspended. Well, they removed the employee. After an eight-week disqualification period--now, that's a pretty gross misconduct, I would think, but they still collected after eight weeks.

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.

SENATOR CUNNINGHAM: And that particular business had to pay \$3,366 into that. Now, is that right, Senator Chambers? I don't think so. Another employee was terminated after showing a boyfriend how to get into the computer system and change the data. The nursing center had to pay in \$2,660. I don't think that was right. I think that person had a little bit of hand in what happened to them, and they need to take some personal responsibility. I believe that most of my comments--we're still talking about the amendments now. I've stated that Senator Schimek's amendment I will oppose. I think that needs a public hearing. I'm still open on Senator Louden's amendment. The rest of my comments I'm going to reserve for the discussion of the bill. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Cunningham. (Visitors introduced.) On with discussion, Senator Johnson.