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SENATOR VRTISKA: Well, probably not. Nothing is ever equal.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Why then would you support a provision like this bill, which punishes the mildest offense as seriously as the worst offense, meaning the maximum is imposed.

SENATOR VRTISKA: Well, it depends on what you call serious. I consider that what they're doing is the right thing to do, simply because if they have committed some type of a misdeed then they should have to pay. I don't care at what level it is. You're talking about employer that's had somebody doing something that's not within the realm of what he's supposed to be doing.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Suppose an employee got angry and told the boss--I don't use the kind of language that the employee would use, so I will quote from that famous...I'd call her a philosopher, who worked at Mel's Diner--kiss my grits. And the boss fired her. And after that was done, somebody else in the place was upset and walked over and slapped the boss, and that person was fired. You think the one who said kiss my grits should be punished as severely as the one who slapped the boss?

SENATOR VRTISKA: Well, sometimes, emotionally, an issue like that can be as damaging to the person...not physically, but psychologically, as a blow or a hit or striking somebody.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: But Senator Vrtiska, you see the point that I'm trying to make, don't you?

SENATOR VRTISKA: I know what you're getting at.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Okay.

SENATOR VRTISKA: And I don't want to...

SENATOR CHAMBERS: And under the existing law, there is what I call a sliding scale, just for ease of reference. But it allows discretion, 7 to 10 weeks disqualification, based on the seriousness of the offense. And that's language in the law now,