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February 24, 2004 LB 1049

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Senator Cunningham, since it's been awhile, would you give us a brief summary of what the bill does? Then I'll go on to Senator Schimek and Senator Louden.

SENATOR CUNNINGHAM: Okay. Thank you, Senator Cudaback and members. It has been awhile. Two weeks ago yesterday is the last time we talked about this bill, so I'm almost having trouble remembering. But to be brief, all this bill does, it very simply, in unemployment law, it changes the waiting period for people that quit without good cause, only for without good cause or for misconduct, it changes the waiting period from 7 to 10 weeks to 13 weeks. And they still are able to collect unemployment for the following 13 weeks, so that is the only change in the bill. This bill came through committee unopposed. It had 14 proponents and no opponents. In my mind, I think it's a very good bill. It's going to save the unemployment fund about \$4.5 million a year. And with that, I'll let Senator Louden talk about his amendment.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Cunningham. Senator Louden, would you like to give us a brief summary of your amendment to LB 1049?

SENATOR LOUDEN: Thank you, Mr. President. I've introduced this amendment, AM2291 to LB 1049, to improve the earning ability of senior citizens. At the present time, a Social Security recipient is not allowed to receive full unemployment benefits. The premiums are paid in for an employee to receive full benefits, but if the recipient is receiving Social Security, they are discounted one-half of their Social Security benefits. This isn't a problem that affects a large number of people. In fact, one of the handouts that I sent around here that in Fiscal Year 2002--and this comes from the Department of Labor--there were 1,241 unemployment benefit recipients that were receiving Social Security in the state of Nebraska. But the people that are have a hardship put upon them. First of all, they have to be on Social Security, and they must also be able to work and want to work and hold a full-time job. They are people who are trying to supplement a small Social Security income by working