

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

February 25, 2004 LB 1049

however, vote for cloture on this level or any level on a bill that unnecessarily impacts people who absolutely need these benefits. I find it almost amusing--and I don't want to criticize Senator Combs at all--but I find it amusing that on one hand she'll expand the availability, the people that can access under employment...unemployment insurance under Senator Louden's amendment, and yet then talks about these people who are terminated or laid off as somehow they think it's an entitlement. Well, let me tell you what Senator Louden's amendment will do. My father is a retired electrician. Made a good living, retired early, raised seven kids. And he mows lawns at the golf course in the summertime, and...just to keep busy, because he's the kind of guy, he just cannot sit still. So I don't...I think he volunteers to do that. But say that he does get paid a modest...say he gets minimum wage, whatever that is, \$5 or \$6 an hour. Every fall they lay him off. They lay off all the people. My dad, he doesn't need unemployment insurance. But he could...and I don't think he's ever been on it in his entire life. But under Senator Louden's amendment, an individual such as him, who has money in the bank, who gets a decent Social Security check, can also access unemployment insurance in the fall when they're terminated from a job that they voluntarily do. Not to pay the bills; they're there because they want to keep busy. Well he...under Senator Louden's amendment, he can access those unemployment insurance benefits. And yet Senator Combs says we should cut off people that actually need them. And I don't think that's appropriate. On one hand, we want to expand the program under Senator Louden's amendment, and on the other hand, we say we need to restrict it because too many people are accessing it, the fund is in danger, we're taking money away, it's too expensive for business. It doesn't make any sense. Let's expand it for the seniors, but let's take it away for the working moms and single moms and dads and family people. That doesn't make one lick of sense. And Senator Combs, I really enjoy your presence here in the Legislature, but I find that unbelievable that we can say it's an entitlement for working families, men and women, single parents with kids, and yet it's not an entitlement for the pensioners who are taking Social Security. That doesn't even make sense. I was under the impression that we were going to work out a compromise here with Senator Cunningham. And I think