

heard during past discussions were not sincere and we really do believe that all these women can get living wage jobs and they're just lazy, trifling, unrighteous and want to lay up there and have babies so they can get 50 or 60 more dollars a month from welfare. That is not what I believe and I hope you will support this amendment.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator Chambers. Senator Rasmussen.

SENATOR RASMUSSEN: Madam President, members of the body, one of the disadvantages of being down front is it's the long way to come sometimes. I appreciate the dilemma here and I think maybe the best solution is that this country allows every family a choice of staying home with their children the first five years of their life and some countries do that, at least they offer a good deal more support so that that is possible. But our predicament in this country is that we don't do that as a matter of policy. It would be one that I would help try and put in place in this country but we're not ready for that right now and we're not going to be able to do it, at least not today. So the predicament here is trying, as Senator Schimek well said, come up with a policy that means that it isn't better to be on welfare than off of welfare. And I guess what I am trying to say in accepting Senator Chambers' amendment is this. If you have a job and you're still getting benefits from the welfare system, that job will define what your maternity leave is. What we do as a state in terms of defining what the contract requirements are will have no effect. That job environment will say this is what you can or cannot have. What we are allowing is for a drop down to part-time participation in the activities, but no extension of the 2-year limit beyond the 12 weeks. Now then a person makes a choice. Do I get back into full time of my training just as soon as possible knowing that things are going to change for me 12 weeks beyond the original date of the 2-year contract, then that is a decision that an individual person can make. I think that this...one of the things that we're struggling with is the fact, and it is a fact, that the longer you stay on welfare, the longer you stay on. And so if for whatever good reason we encourage people to stay on the system longer, means is going to be more and more difficult for that person to get off and I don't argue that from the standpoint as a state policymaker, that that's going to be costly to us. I argue simply for the benefit of the person who is on welfare, that it is better for them to be able to move and