

has been doing that. You know, for most of that time Congress has provided the bankruptcy exemptions. But, in 1918 Congress decided to allow the states to provide the bankruptcy exemptions. Then, in 1978 Congress said, wait a minute, we are going to have a federal exemption or we are going to allow states to opt out. Now Senator DeCamp told us that the question of who got to set forth the exemptions was the sticking point for the passage of the federal bankruptcy act. That is not true. What is true is whether or not the bankruptcy referees would be judges equivalent to district judges. That was the sticking point for five years that was a hotly fought issue. Finally, they are now equal to district court judges, there is a separate in the sense of bankruptcy judge. But the exemption question has never been that significant an issue on the bankruptcy area in this bill. Now, studies have shown that the only major relationship between exemptions to taking bankruptcy is in the exemptions applicable to wages. If state law allows creditors to take all of the wages of debtors, they are going to have a lot more bankruptcy filings than in those states where creditors can't take any wages of debtors. That has been the true relationship between exemptions and bankruptcies. But, the availability of exemptions in the bankruptcy process itself has not been very significant as to who will or who will not take out a bankruptcy. Now in the end you know I get right down to the whole issue of the morality of being poor, of the morality of being in debt, of the morality of walking away from ones bills. I guess in my own mind I

SENATOR CLARK PRESIDING.

SENATOR CLARK: You have one minute left.

SENATOR JOHNSON:don't look upon that as a moral issue. I look upon that as a social question. To what extent are we willing to allow strapped people who either wittingly or unwittingly over extended themselves to be able to make a fresh start? I support the federal exemptions so at this time do forty-seven other states and Nebraska. I support a uniform standard. It makes sense. It is the right way for us to go. Now, Mr. President, this bill is a very short bill to read. Obviously I will be as effective if it fails for less than 25 votes than it will be if it is brought back and the enacting clause is struck. So at this time I would withdraw my motion and of course urge every thinking and thoughtful member of this body to vote red following the reading.

SENATOR CLARK: The motion is withdrawn. The Clerk will read the bill. Senator Murphy.