

savings. One final thing, in terms of ranking of importance of cost containment strategies, greater cost sharing is the third most important factor in cost containment but it is also in the middle in terms of number of times it is implemented. It is very difficult to get employees to agree to this change. They object very strongly but that doesn't diminish the fact that it is a very important cost containment feature and sometimes you have to stand up and do the hard thing, as Senator Johnson says a lot, and do what is right in making that change because ultimately it is in the best interest of everybody. I ask your support for the amendment.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Warner please.

SENATOR WARNER: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, I appreciate the sincerity with which Senator Wesely approaches this issue, and it is one that was discussed at a great length within the committee, and from early on in the session, we had a number of briefings from the consultant that was involved, a lot of in depth discussion. I guess I would suggest you do not add this amendment for a couple of reasons, not the least of which you are dealing with health insurance that is one of the fringe benefits of any employee including state employees. The salary and benefits go hand in hand and most of the proposals, including the proposals we had this year which came out of the task force that reference has been made to earlier, was that if there was a sufficient salary adjustment that was occurring parallel, at the same time, as a change in health insurance, why that then there might be some reasonable trade off, and there were a variety of alternatives of what some of those other alternatives might be as had been indicated, to include dental insurance, it might include legislation that...I think it is generally referred to...LB 390, at least, medical expense accounts, a way to offset for individuals to some extent the higher cost, personal cost they might have in the event of illness. The point I would like to make is that I don't think it is wise to deal with the comprehensive health issue in isolation to the other factors that go into the part of a salary fringe benefit policy, and to do this only for the comprehensive health is selecting one component out of a number of components which I think in the long run could run into difficulty. One of the factors that are significantly different from my point of view is the Supreme Court decision of a few weeks ago which state employees can