

were even six people who did not vote, who were either absent or did not vote that day. And I suspect that that...that it would have easily had 30 votes to override the veto, it would be the law of this state today had the timing been different. Nothing has really changed in the way of the judicial system or in the way of how the tort claims are filed or litigated or anything like that. The bill, in my view, is an improvement over the present system and it should be enacted. And I don't think there is any real reason that we should be talking about bracketing it or talking about negotiating further or talking about revising the bill in some way because it was an acceptable bill last year, it is an acceptable bill this year. And contrary to Senator Conway, I would be very dubious of any amendments that will be offered to this bill. And I would be very dubious of any senators who change their vote on this bill as a result of any amendments or as a result of amendments not getting added, because we, as a legislative body, are the 49 people who are supposed to vote on a bill. We are the ones that make the ultimate decision on whether legislation is good or bad or should be amended or should stay the same. We are the people that have that responsibility that has been given to us by the voters in our state to pass good legislation. And while I can appreciate special interest groups and various lobbying groups for having input and making suggestions and trying to work out compromises, it is us who make the final decision. And so I would just ask you to advance this bill on General File, to be very dubious about any amendments that will be added because I will...I, as a member of this body, will be very interested to see if there are any amendments offered, because the effect of the bill is good and I think if it had been approved last year, if it had not been vetoed or if we would have had the chance to override the veto, we would be sitting here today congratulating ourselves for the effective piece of legislation that we had passed, that had been hammered out, that had been a product of this Legislature in its deliberative processes.

PRESIDENT: One minute.

SENATOR McFARLAND: So I would encourage all of you to advance it today, view very carefully any amendments that are going to be added, view very carefully any lobbying that is done to you on this bill. Keep in mind that you have a responsibility not only to the lobbying groups and the various special interests that are interested in this bill, you have a responsibility to the public that elected you and to the people that will be