

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Senator Hall, would you care to close?

SENATOR HALL: Thank you, Mr. President, and members, in no way did I mean to leave the impression that I thought the Appropriations Committee had in some way slighted the Workers' Comp Court. That's not the case, in my opinion. The question here is one of do we allow for what I think is very much needed increase in their personnel. It does not amount to much at all in the way of dollars. It would be an increase and I understand that and I appreciate that. But the fact of the matter is the need is there. With regard to the capital construction aspect, what happened? There was a large room. It was divided up by walls that were semipermanent. They were torn down by the 309 Task Force, left carpet with holes in it where the dividers had been. The \$13,000 was appropriated so that the carpet could be replaced which was although discretionary probably something that could not wait, had to be done. The issue here is providing \$25,000 for dividers that are moveable so that they can go back to basically having some semblance of order in their office with regard to privacy, so that they can continue to function as best they can. You provide for two additional people who are clerical folks to the tune of roughly about \$35,000 a year so that they can continue to process the claims as best they can. It is clearly an issue of trying to be as cost effective as possible because the...even though we have had the increase in the judges recently, and I appreciate those, without the support staff to do that front work, more and more of the judges' time is spent doing some of that work and it's not as cost effective as providing for the support staff necessary to keep up as best we can. The one additional person that was added as a support staff person is limited in their aspect. They totally must work in a vocational rehabilitation area. They are limited because they are paid out of that trust fund and the statutes require that their work be limited to that area so they're not able to work on the day to day petitions and the filings that come in. These people are very much needed. It's about \$98,000, 33 of that would be in the second year, the balance would be in the first year and the 25,000 for the dividers would go away after they had been provided. It would not be ongoing cost. I think it's a very reasonable request. I would urge the body's support of the amendment. Thank you, Mr. President.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. And the question is the adoption