

you, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT: Thank you. May I introduce a guest, please, of Senator Haberman. Under the south balcony, we have Mrs. Beverly Holzfaster, who is the mother of our Page, Amy. Mrs. Holzfaster, would you please stand and be recognized by the Legislature. Thank you for visiting us and we are appreciating the services of your daughter. Thank you. Mr. Clerk, I understand we have an amendment.

CLERK: Mr. President, Senator McFarland would move to amend the committee amendments. (See page 786 of the Legislative Journal.)

PRESIDENT: Senator McFarland, please.

SENATOR MCFARLAND: Thank you, Mr. President. Fellow Senators, two years ago when I became familiar with this issue on unemployment, I was struck by how low we are in our unemployment maximum weekly benefits in comparison to our surrounding states, and in comparison to the states in the entire nation. We rank 43rd out of 50 states in what we pay as a maximum, that being \$245 per week for unemployment insurance benefits, or, excuse me, for workers' compensation benefits. I am sorry. If I said unemployment before, I meant workers' comp. The bill, itself, would have raised the maximum workers' comp benefits for a week from 245 to 290. It would have not dramatically improved our rank among the states or our surrounding states, but it would at least have boosted that amount. At the time it was introduced, and I passed around the World-Herald editorial, if you have a chance to look at it, it is not often that the World-Herald and I always agree on policy issues but their headline is the Injured, Jobless Workers Could Use an Increase, and reading from it in the second column, it says, "LB 313," this bill, "would raise the Nebraska maximum to \$290. Says, that amount, for a person whose working life is cut short by a job-related injury, is not excessive." They indicated their support of the bill. They conclude, "Recent improvements in Nebraska's business climate have provided more jobs and opportunities for workers. Improving the benefits for unemployed and injured workers should be the next step." That was written last year, February 6 of '89, a little over a year ago. That bill did not advance from committee. It stayed there all last year. There were apparently some negotiations that went on to which I was not a party, even though it was my bill. So the maximum benefits,