

which was \$245 in 1988, continued through 1989 as well. No raise in those benefits occurred. Now the committee amendment comes out and says, well, it shouldn't be 290, as the World-Herald agreed would be reasonable. We are going to reduce it to 255 and 265. I think that is entirely inappropriate and just a real unfair situation with respect to what we would pay in workers' comp benefits or allow to be paid in workers' comp benefits to those employees who are injured on the job. I like the second part of the amendment. I commend Senator Coordsen and the committee for bringing the second part about the deductible. It was part of LB 986. I think that is an excellent idea. It is worthy of consideration and I plan to support that part of the amendment. What I, however, have proposed in this committee...amendment to the committee amendments is that, instead of just increasing it \$10 to 255 and 265 the following year, I propose to raise it to 275 and 285. That is not a significant increase. Take a look at the chart that I have passed around of the information on LB 313. It notes that we are 43rd out of the 50 states. Look at the bottom of it and it is a comparison of maximum weekly worker's comp benefits for our surrounding states: Iowa, \$660; Colorado, \$355, and now for 1990, it will be \$371; and 1990 for Iowa, \$684. They have raised their workers' comp benefits. Wyoming in 1989 was \$346 per week. I think in 1990 that has raised, we don't have the exact figures. South Dakota went from 281 to 289. Missouri went to 289.75. Kansas, the lowest one, is at \$271 already, what they are paying in maximum workers' comp benefits. What I am proposing is that we at least be near and competitive with Kansas, and not be so far behind our surrounding states. I think 275 for 1990, 285 for 1991 is completely fair and reasonable. As a matter of fact, I really think it should be quite more than that, but I realize the past history of this, so I am suggesting this amount as a reasonable change, at least at this time. And I think it is merited and warranted. The purpose of workers' comp, of course, is to provide an income for the injured employee, who may be injured on the job at no fault of his or her own, and to allow them a living wage at least until they are recovered from their injuries or rehabilitated so that they can get other employment. What happens often in those situations is that the family and the employee are devastated when an injury occurs on the job that may not be the fault of the employee at all. A young man and his family, if they are like most people in our state, they have house payments to meet, they have doctor bills to pay, they have car payments to meet. Usually you have a budget of some