

family at a time when you are injured. Senator Conway made an interesting comment to me a little bit ago and he talked about, you know, if workers' comp has really benefited businesses, because if it were not for workers' comp, we would have a total liability system where employers would have to pay huge sums to have insurance to cover liability for their own negligence or for a fault if their employees are injured on the job. What we have done with the workers' comp system is allow for a mechanism whereby you get prompt and immediate coverage and you don't have to litigate, you don't have to worry about the negligence aspect of it, or proof of negligence, or whether who was at fault. If the accident occurs during the course of and arising out of the unemployment, or out of the employment I should say, then the employee is compensated at a reduced rate but the medicals are paid for and you try to give a living wage. The World-Herald article is quite instructive, and if you haven't followed this debate, take a look at the World-Herald article that is on your desk with regard to the costs. The first, the World-Herald said the Nebraska maximum in LB 13, LB 313 would be raised to 290. The World-Herald, which is, you know, a relatively conservative view on this issue, says that is not excessive; that that is acceptable. It talks about the improved business climate and the World-Herald recommends that the injured workers could use an increase and should use it. The committee amendments came out and only raised it from 245 to 255, only \$10 a week, and it hasn't been raised in two years. If you look at the chart, what I am suggesting with my amendment is to raise it to 275. It still places us at the bottom among our surrounding states. Look at what Iowa pays, 684. Look at what Colorado pays. South Dakota is at 289. Missouri is at 289. We would still be behind these other states but at least it would be more fair than what we have got now. I think it is a totally reasonable amendment. As I said, I think, I wish it were more. I think we need to have concern about the working people of our state. We have an improved economy. And I think that they should benefit as well. And I would yield the rest of my time to Senator Morrissey.

PRESIDENT: Senator Morrissey, if I may interrupt for a second. (Gavel.) We're quite noisy and I would remind you, members of the Legislature, we are under call and you should be in your seats. Senator Morrissey.

SENATOR MORRISSEY: Thank you, Mr. President and members. Thank you, Senator McFarland. Again, I would just say we can't have