

SPEAKER BARRETT PRESIDING

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Back to a discussion of the Hall amendment to the committee amendments. Senator Chizek. Senator Ashford, would you care to discuss the amendment to the amendment?

SENATOR ASHFORD: Thank you, Mr. President and Mr. Speaker and members. Just very briefly, I did not vote for the first amendment and I will not vote for this amendment, but let me say that in my mind it does not necessarily mean that the increases are not justified, but I will tell you that I think that a vote for the amendment at this point, after there has been a compromise struck between the two groups that classically meet head-on in the Labor Committee, Business and Labor Committee carries great weight with me. I know two years ago on our tort bill we thought we had an agreement with what I thought was an agreement with the insurance industry on that bill. And when it came time to...for that bill to come to the floor, all of a sudden we didn't have an agreement. And even though I feel that Senator Hall and Senator McFarland are making some good points certainly in the area of workmen's compensation, which is different in nature than unemployment compensation in my view, I still believe that when the two parties get together and reach a compromise that both can agree on for this session, I think that, at least to me, carries great weight. I wish that we could do...continue to comply with those types of agreements on other bills. But I certainly understand the frustration Senator Hall, and Senator McFarland and Senator Chizek have voiced, but I also give great weight to what has been agreed upon by the parties. So, with that explanation, I'm going to vote against the amendment. Thank you.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Senator Hall, would you care to discuss your amendment?

SENATOR HALL: Yes, thank you, Mr. President, members. We checked back with folks who had served either on the committee or as counsel to the committee, and as one of my esteemed colleagues once said about the type of automobile that he drove, he said that he never drove an automobile in the same decade in which he happened to be living and that was manufactured in the same decade that he happened to be living. This change in the statutes was not done in the past decade, it never happened in 1980, because the folks who served the committee as counsel are