

on the amendment that was just defeated on a vote of 21 to 23. What strikes me very interestingly is the partisan division on that vote. It is almost totally along partisan lines. Almost every Republican in this body voted against the amendment, Republicans who voted. Almost every Democrat in this body voted for the...for my amendment. There were only two Democrats who voted no against my amendment. There were, thankfully, there were only...there were at least four Republican's who voted yes on the amendment, and I appreciate their support. It's unfortunate that things get broken along partisan lines because what you have is you have, what, 19 Democrats, all 19 Democrat...excuse me, 19...17 Democrats voting for the thing, and you have 21 Republicans voting against, very partisan division. And it's unfortunate that we have this view in the state that somehow if you are with one particular party you are for the business interests to the exclusion of working people, and on the other hand I suppose there is a perception the other way that somehow if you are a member of the party to which I happen to belong, that you favor the working people over business. The problem with that type of partisan analysis, and sometimes it gets oversimplified and overused, is that you don't realize there is a mutually beneficial way in which business and working people can both benefit under legislation or under economic conditions, that what is good for working people is often good for employers, and what is good for employers is often good for working people. This is one of these issues where it seems to me we try to have our political philosophy dictate the decision on this issue without really looking at it and saying what is fair, what's reasonable, what would benefit our state as a whole. Our worker's comp benefits are so minimal in comparison to other states, particularly surrounding states, we're not competing in any way. The only thing we're competing for is to be the lowest. If we wanted to.... Some of the arguments, I mean I heard on the floor we should abolish worker's comp altogether, and then we'd have a great business climate. That's not going to happen. I mean the worker's compensation system was set and established to help both working people get immediate and necessary relief and get their medical expenses paid, get them back to work, get them rehabilitated, give them some kind of way to survive during that...

SPEAKER BARRETT: One minute.

SENATOR McFARLAND: ...time. And help employers as well to get these people active and to have some kind of continuity in their