

Legislative Journal.)

SPEAKER BARRETT: The Chair recognizes Senator McFarland.

SENATOR MCFARLAND: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Fellow senators, you have had distributed to you a handout explaining this amendment. It is similar to the amendment we voted upon on General File that was rejected on a vote of 20 to 21, with the exception that it decreases the amount of worker's comp in the second year from the 275 that I proposed in the amendment to 265, as indicated in this chart. What I have done is this, after the vote was taken last time, there was a convention of AFL-CIO people who met out at the Villager and I got to speak to their group later that afternoon, and they said, in speaking with a number of senators who attended their luncheon, some of the senators had indicated an inclination to support a general increase but not the one type of increase I had proposed. What I have done is this. This amendment says that instead of increasing LB 313 maximum weekly benefits to 255 in 1990 and 265 in 1991, what we would do is just increase them to 265 in 1990 and they would remain so in 1991 and thereafter unless another bill were introduced into the Business and Labor Committee. There is a logic for doing this, and the logic is that last year this bill was scheduled to come out of the committee. We had been going, generally, on a \$10 a year increase. When the bill did not get out of committee in 1989 as we anticipated, the maximum benefit remained at the 245 level, and had it been just the \$10 per year increase that had been somewhat a, oh, kind of a tradition or of sorts a tradition, the benefit would have increased to 259 in 1989, but since it did not, I am proposing to pretend like it did and, in effect, correct that problem by indicating it be 265 in 1990 and then if it changes thereafter...or would stay the same unless changed by another bill. The second thing is the...you will still notice in the previous handout that I gave you in comparing the weekly maximum worker's compensation benefit, we would still be at the bottom of our sister states in the region. Right now, Kansas ranks last at a \$271 per week figure, and, by raising ours to 265, we would at least be a little more compatible with them although we would still rank behind them, and we would certainly rank behind Missouri and South Dakota and Wyoming and far behind Colorado and Wyoming, and even farther behind Iowa, which really has a very high maximum benefit. So it is a fairly simple procedure, slightly different than what I offered before. I am hopeful that some of you would reconsider if you voted against the