

amendments to LB 90. All those in favor say aye. Opposed no. They are adopted.

CLERK: Mr. President, Senator Landis would move to amend his bill. Page 1811, Senator.

SPEAKER BAACK: Senator Landis.

SENATOR LANDIS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, members of the Legislature. You'll recall that LB 90 is a bill that creates in the Court Administrators Office the position of a director of mediation, and the adoption of a method of grants for the creation of mediation centers around the state. There were questions on General File, particularly Senator Withem who asked about the proper definition of the coverage of the act. And I pointed out that the bill did allow for these mediation centers to be available in all civil claims and disputes, and that that was broad enough to cover the kinds of issues that Senator Withem was concerned about, which included commercial complaints and the use, by small businesses, of the settlements of disputes. However, in order to accommodate and make certain that those topics are discussed and highlighted in the bill, I've offered this amendment to say that the mediation centers may undertake the mediation of civil claims and disputes, including but not limited to consumer and commercial disputes, complaints, disputes between neighbors, disputes between business associates, landlords and tenants, and among communities. Also to make clear what the relationship is with respect to information that should pass between the mediation center and the court. We indicate some new language in this amendment that says, in order for a referral to be effective, and this is a referral from a court, all parties involved must consent to such referral. If a court refers a case to an approved center, the center shall provide information to the court as to whether an agreement was reached. If the court requests a copy of the agreement, the center shall provide it, thereby making clear that only parties who consent voluntarily, in fact, will be engaged in a court referred mediation, information will be provided to the court at the court's request. Let me close by saying that what I passed out earlier this morning was an assessment by Justice O'Connor that our current court system is very expensive. The fixed costs per case, in federal and state courts, for a jury trial is \$8,000. This is not for attorneys fees, this is not for any litigation expenses, like depositions, it's merely for the fixed cost of