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March 17, 2005 LB 739

Senator.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Who proposed \$10?

SENATOR CUNNINGHAM: I honestly could not tell you that.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Then there's no reason not to accept my amendment, is there? And then we can move on from this part of the division, at least this part of the amend...the part that I want to amend right now.

SENATOR CUNNINGHAM: I would currently tell you that I would not be willing to accept your amendment.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Well, if you don't know why ten was put there, how can you tell us...I guess you're...let me back up. I don't want to put words in your mouth. You don't know why ten was selected. Is that true?

SENATOR CUNNINGHAM: Well, I know why it was selected. You asked me if I knew who suggested it.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Okay. Why was it selected?

SENATOR CUNNINGHAM: Well, right now, we have an indexing formula that was put in, I believe, in 1998. And I don't remember if it's the CPI or which one they index with, Senator, but if you look at the various years, some years there's a very minimal increase. Some years it's been \$15, some years, \$8. This was just put in as another way to do it but to keep it from going too high too fast. As I told you, it has increased greatly since 19...I believe it was 1998 that is was \$184 a year's weekly benefit amount, and today it is \$280 or \$288.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Senator Cunningham, if somebody starts at rock bottom and moves up two steps, that can be considered a great increase over what the person had been occupying as a status. But if you put it into a context where you're not looking at it in a vacuum, that two steps up may not really amount to a hill of beans. Would you agree that that could be the way something would be interpreted if looked at in a broader