

Senator Schmit's amendment. (Read Goll amendment found on page 1613 of the Legislative Journal.)

PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes Senator Goll.

SENATOR GOLL: Mr. President and members, I certainly concur with Senator Schmit amendment. When you get involved in talking about workmen's compensation and the weekly rates, it is like talking about child abuse, or unemployment compensation increases, or ADC payments, or foster care, but what we are doing today is raising the weekly rate from \$200 to \$235. My amendment, my amendment would change that to \$210 per week. In 1983, 1983, we increased the maximum limits on workmen's comp. from \$180 to \$200 a week. Now, raising the maximum rate to \$235 a week would mean an increase in premium cost to small business and big business across the state of 2.9 percent, or approximately, approximately \$2.7 million in additional costs to business in the State of Nebraska. Now the Department of Economic Development has a budget of \$15.7 million to promote industry, tourism and anything else that will benefit the economy of this state. You and I know that any business who considers Nebraska for location or expansion looks at the labor force, they look at the tax base, they look at property taxes, they look at unemployment compensation rates, just to name a few, as well as what is the cost of workmen's compensation, another important part of their business investment. In my district an implement dealer, the only one in the county, closed. An automobile dealer, one of only two in the county, closed. From a recent issue of the Lincoln newspapers there was an article, and I quote excerpts from it. The dramatic decline of farm income, construction and housing. It is increasingly difficult to be profitable in this economy. We feel it is time to leave the business. Times in Nebraska, and especially rural Nebraska, have been very, very difficult. We are all tied to that economy. This affects all business throughout the State of Nebraska. People aren't moving into the state. The population isn't growing. The agricultural economy is in bad shape and I don't think we've seen the worst of the results yet. My amendment, my amendment will increase the weekly rate to \$210. It will increase...it will represent an increase of the cost of doing business at about \$1 million in premiums. There is one other thing that is significant. Governmental subdivisions who self-insure, that is the state, that is the counties, that is the cities,