

fair amendment previously at \$126. As I recall it was my amendment and at that time I felt that I went as far as I could personally go. I know that I talked to several of you. Several of you talked to me. At that point you were not in sympathy with any increase at all, maintaining the \$120 limit, maximum limit that we have today. Many of you, like myself, came from a point of no support, zero, to a 5 percent increase at \$126. I finally determined that perhaps an increase was in order, 5 percent being that particular figure inasmuch as those limits had not been raised for two years. I wanted something also that could survive on Final Reading. It's my opinion that \$126 can survive. I have some concern that \$132 cannot survive on Final Reading. You know you can reach for the golden ring and reach a little bit too far and sometimes fall out of the saddle. I think a 5 percent increase in benefits is reasonable and I think it is responsible in light of our current economic conditions as I suggested earlier. I would hope the body would vote no on the motion to return. Thank you.

PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes Senator Hefner.

SENATOR HEFNER: Mr. President and members of the body, I rise to oppose bringing this bill back to attach this amendment. Previously I didn't want any increase in unemployment compensation benefits because especially the small businessmen are going through trying times, but I finally agreed that perhaps maybe the 5 percent wouldn't be so bad, maybe we could stand that. But since that time we've increased workmen's compensation benefits quite a little. We're also attaching or it looks like LB 715 will pass and this will add some more cost of doing business. But I predict that if we put this amendment on, this bill will not pass. This bill will not pass on Final Reading and I think it was agreed by quite a few of us that we would see LB 216 pass with a 5 percent increase which would increase the benefits up from \$120 a week to \$126 a week. This takes it another step. This takes it from \$126 to \$132 and I just do not think that we ought to do it at this time. Another thing, this is going to hit the negative account payers real hard. If you remember correctly last year we raised that to a 5.4 percent and I just feel that it will put an undue hardship on these employers and, therefore, I would urge you to reject bringing this bill back.