

SENATOR WESELY: The question before us isn't amending the bill, the question before us is are there any salvageable part to the bill and I don't think there is. I want to correct something. Senator Beutler, as he walked up, gave me information that a miscellaneous claim required a unanimous vote. That is not correct, Senator Barrett. It is a majority vote on the miscellaneous claim, but on the tort claim, which is a very important element to the claims process, it does require a unanimous vote. My sense is that that is a mistake to go back to the system circa in 1980 and before. In 1981 a bill was brought before this body, it was brought to you by the Banking Committee and it was passed on the vote of 42-5, I believe, back in 1981. Most of the members of this body that were here at that time voted for that measure. It was something that we thought was appropriate at that time and there is no reason now four years later to change. As I quoted from Art Weaver, the Insurance Director, it was felt in 1981 after they went through that long process, the Governor had a task force and reorganization of state government. They looked at all kinds of areas of government and they came back with a number of recommendations and one of those recommendations was to change this claims process and risk management and they said that the control of the claims process should be clearly in the hands of the Governor through the three appointed positions on the Insurance Department, the Department of Administrative Services and the Department of Labor because of their expertise and their experience in the area and that was clearly the decision in 1981 to go with that policy and I think clearly it was the right decision to make. At this time especially with the restrictions on the tort claim that we found out it would be wrong to go back to that other policy. We overwhelmingly adopted the amendment and it seems clear at this time that we should proceed with it. Now why is it in fact the Governor's authority that we are concerned about? It is state government as an entity that claims are filed against. The State Treasurer and the State Auditor really have no say over it whatsoever. Their functions are separate and apart from the actual administration and management of state government. Their job in the Auditor's case is to oversee the accounts to make sure they balance right and everybody is doing what they are supposed to with the money. And the Treasurer is to handle the money and make sure it is invested properly and just oversee that function. But they are separate and apart from