

.\$120 a week. Their unemployment workmen's benefit amount would be \$72 a week. That would then be subject to federal and state income tax, and after tax dollars, their benefit would be \$62.68 a week. This would equal approximately a \$1.57 an hour which would be 47 percent of minimum wage. So it would be less than half, their benefit amount would be less than half of what they currently make. I would not see that as any incentive to stay home and not to work. We have increased the table in the past. We are looking at increasing the table this year. I think that probably what we need to do in the future is look at some way that we are not in here every other year dealing with an auction situation which is I am sure what we are going to be getting into in the next couple of minutes but I think that it is very important that we look at this situation. In South Omaha, you know that in just the last two weeks we have had another packing plant close. We have had two of them close in the last year and we have had a brewery that the one Senator who has a very special interest in that isn't here today but we have had approximately 1200 people out of work in the last year and a half. It is, the district that I represent is a very blue collared district. These people work in union type jobs. A lot of them work for less than the state average annual income and they find it difficult to live on that. When they are put out of a job, they are put on unemployment if they qualify and then they have to go out and look for another job because we are not talking about something that does allow people to continue at their basic livelihood that they are used to. Again, someone who is on the minimum wage does not receive even half of that amount if they are on workmen's unemployment. I would ask that you would support the bill. I think that it is very much needed. We see that statistics show that unemployment has increased in the State of Nebraska slightly as well as in across the country, only slightly. The way that we pay for unemployment is through tax on employers. In the late 1970's many states' unemployment funds were going bankrupt. We found that many of them were in essence going to the wall. They had to borrow money or they were bankrupt. The State of Nebraska has consistently had a solvent fund, very solvent in fact. Currently the fund balance is approximately \$71 million. Last year after taxes were collected from employers, after benefits were paid out, and interest accrued, the fund grew by \$11 million in one year. With the amendment that I offer, in essence the bill, if it were in effect for 1984, the fiscal note shows that the fund