

two in the business community. I urge the body to accept the amendment. Thank you, Mr. President.

SPEAKER NICHOL: We've switched from the Hall amendment to the Barrett amendment so I have lights on. I will see how many of you wish to speak on this. Senator Wesely, did you wish to speak to the Barrett amendment? Okay.

SENATOR WESELY: Mr. Speaker, members, I was going to rise to support Senator Hall's amendment which I thought constructively dealt with the biggest problem with the bill and I would also rise I guess at this time since we are discussing the Barrett amendment to the Hall amendment to oppose the Barrett amendment. Let me talk first about Senator Hall's amendment. The problem in committee that I felt needed to be changed was exactly what Senator Hall is changing with this amendment. He had adjusted upwards the table for unemployment benefits and what that means is exactly what the employers in the state are very concerned about. It makes it more attractive to go on unemployment. If you get a higher percentage of your wages back in unemployment benefits, then there is more of an incentive to go on unemployment. Our plan presently is not overly generous in that respect but it probably could be argued that Senator Hall's proposal would have been a bit too generous in that direction and I am glad that he is changing that. So that should take care of a lot of the concerns of most employers in this state about the attraction of unemployment benefits. And one of the interesting things about our unemployment benefit levels in this state is that we have a progressive unemployment benefit table. That is to say that those that have lower incomes and thus lower unemployment benefits get a higher percentage of their wages back in unemployment benefits so the low income get a little more help but, you know, they need that extra help because of the low wages that they have. Those that have a little higher income get a little less back in unemployment benefits. They have a little more money, probably don't need quite as much return on their unemployment benefits based on their wages and so their incentive is even less to go on unemployment. So I think we have a progressive system that is a very reasonable one. I am really impressed with it. I didn't even realize this before and I think Senator Hall is right not to make the changes that he was proposing. I would think it would be wrong at this time to adjust to the level that Senator Barrett is suggesting, \$126. We have