

the \$225 as we were debating or amended on Senator Schmit's amendment. My amendment would say that we're going to leave it at the \$235 for the rest of this year. We're then going to go to the average weekly wage concept. We will use first of all for the first year 85 percent of that and then increase that 5 percent per year until we get to the 100 percent and then that would be the cap on workers compensation. Now that would cost, the first year it would cost about 3.2 percent and from then on about 1.2, 1.3 and 1.4 is the estimation as to what the cost would be for the employers for that insurance coverage. Now remember worker's compensation is a protection for the employers. It provides them a mechanism whereby they cannot be sued regardless of how negligent they are when one of their employees are injured. But the best part of all of this particular type of a mechanism it seems to me is that we do not get in these types of bidding battles every year or two as to what the cap had ought to be. If the wage goes down, the cap would go down. As the wage goes up, the cap would go up and it seems to me that that is the logical method and mechanism that we had ought to put in our statutes. If it works in 30 other states it certainly should be able to work in the State of Nebraska and it would recognize the fact that we do have employees who are working in more dangerous occupations than other employees and as a result of being in those particular areas they are being paid more. It is totally unfair it seems to me to say to an individual who is perhaps getting \$400 a week and has made the commitments for that salary of \$400 per week including buying some things on time or a car or whatever, and then if they are injured on the job, then to suddenly limit them to as it is right now, to half of that. As Senator Schmit pointed out yesterday, what we do is we force people to turn to welfare or we force people to not make their payments which winds up hurting other businesses which winds up hurting the other businessmen in the community. This is a mechanism that the State of Nebraska had ought to adopt, but I'm also a realist. Ideally this would be the way to do it, but I've watched this body operate and I realize that it is not going to accept it, so I will tell you this much. I've made the pitch. Senator Barrett has graciously agreed to introduce with me a study resolution this summer, looking at this type of a situation. Hopefully we will have some input from the various people involved, possibly a piece of legislation next year that you can all examine at your leisure, well as much leisure as you have in here, and I'm sure between now