

President.

PRESIDENT: The motion prevails. The debate is closed. Senator DeCamp, you may close.

SENATOR DECAMP: Mr. President, I would like to address four things; first of all, the issue that Senator Barrett quite properly raised, what is a fair amount; second of all, survivability of the bill which is just as significant; third, the issue of taking the amendment on Final Reading and the significance of the amendment and the amount of time I've spent on this or any other amendment; and, fourth, the what I call the tickler, the issue that I think justifies me or anybody that I think could be labeled pro-business voting for the amendment. Number one, fairness, the increase proposed is 5 percent. Now that is a false figure. The increase proposed and in the bill now is less than 2.5 percent. It was two years ago we last increased this. Therefore, if you were to just keep even, just keep even with where you were on unemployment, you would increase about the amount I am proposing because the inflation has been about 4 percent, and if you really figure the inflation as it impacts lower wage earners because of the goods they have to buy which are more inflation-ridden, the inflation for them is significantly more than 4 percent. So in terms of being fair and keeping a balance exactly as Senator Barrett has proposed \$132 does that. It maintains about where they were. Now there is a reason for doing that and those of you, Senator Warner, Senator Cal Carsten, Senator Schmit that have been here a long time know that every two or three years we have to address the workmen's comp. and the unemployment issue, and any time you allow that balance to get too far out of line, then the proposal that comes in is a six or eight or ten or 15 or 20 or 21 percent increase all at one time as has occurred regularly in the past. It is better to keep, in my opinion, an amount that is realistic and maintains that balance over a period of time than to have it all come in at a later time because the next hit you get will be making up for what you didn't give this time in terms of inflation. So it is not a 5 percent increase as portrayed in the bill anymore than if you got 10 percent interest on your money one year and zero percent interest the next year, that is not 10 percent interest. That's 5 percent or less. It has been two years since we increased it. I repeat, therefore, it would take the increase I am proposing just to keep even with the inflation