

amendment and then to reject the bill.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Abboud, Senator Beutler, Senator Lundy. Senator Abboud first.

SENATOR ABOUD: Mr. President, colleagues, I rise again to support Senator Beutler's amendment. I again want to reiterate the fact that this is a major change with this bill. I don't feel that by taking out this particular section that it in any way cripples the bill. I think we are talking about some major changes here, allowing state employees to expose some corruption and inefficiencies in state government. We allow for some protection for them also. But I feel that changing the burden around is the proper way. It probably should have been left that way when it left the committee, but it didn't. I feel that it is a good amendment. As for the kill motion that is going to be sponsored by Senator DeCamp, I assume after this amendment, I point out that you can vote for this amendment, get this amendment attached to the bill and still vote to kill the bill if you don't like it. So I would still urge the adoption of this amendment. Thank you.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Beutler, please, then Senator Lundy, then Senator Higgins.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Mr. Speaker, members of the Legislature, I'm really sorry that certain members of the Legislature see this as such a radical situation we have here. Some, on the one hand, are stating the radical position that the bill should be killed and, on the other hand, it is being stated by the proponents that the extension of employee rights, as represented by the gold copy of the bill, is absolutely essential the way it is. I consider both propositions radical in the context of this particular proposition. If you adopt this amendment then you will be in a position, in my opinion, where you will have extended a reasonable amount of protection to the employees of the state with regard to the whistle-blowing problem, but not too much. I don't think that the employer-employee balance will be inappropriately upset by the passage of this bill with my amendment. That all depends on what you want to do. If you don't want to address this whistle-blowing problem, okay vote to kill it, vote against the amendment, manipulate it, do what you want. But I think that the whistle-blowing problem is a problem. Senator Vickers and I, one of the