

two-thirds of what you were making, up to, under current law, a maximum of \$225 a week. So if you are making \$300 a week, and you are injured through no fault of your own and you can't work, and you've got 5 kids to support, the most you are going to get is \$200 a week, two-thirds of your average weekly wage. What this bill does is it increases that maximum, the current maximum of \$225. Now that is fine if your earnings are \$337.50 per week. Two-thirds of that is \$225. But if your earnings are \$400 a week, or \$450 a week, you can receive no more than \$225 a week. What this bill does is it changes that maximum figure from \$225 a week to 80 percent of the state's average weekly wage, which as I indicated will make it about \$238 a week. Then it goes to 90 percent the second year, which is about \$278. And it goes to 100 percent the third year, which is about \$319. Now the current system where we have to come into the Legislature every year, or every other year to get an increase of that dollar amount results in an auction here on the floor, and many of you have participated in that in previous years. This takes away that auctioning situation. It sets up a system so that the average weekly wage controls what the benefits are going to be. You still will not be entitled to more than two-thirds of whatever your average weekly wage was or is. But, like 42 other states, it ties that maximum benefit to the state's average weekly wage, 80 percent the first year, 90 percent the second, and 100 percent the third. It makes a great deal of sense to structure our system in this fashion, like 42 other states do. As I indicated, it is one of the essential recommendations of the Commission on Workmen's Compensation statutes convened by President Nixon in the early seventies. I'd ask the passage...the advancement and the passage of this bill. Thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR CARSTEN: Senator DeCamp. Senator DeCamp. Senator Landis, do you want to talk on the bill?

SENATOR LANDIS: I will, however, I'll renew my light as I understand that there is a kill motion on the bill, and...

SENATOR CARSTEN: Excuse me, Senator Landis. Senator DeCamp is back.

SENATOR LANDIS: Fine, I'll be happy to wait until after John's made his statement.