

individuals that we want to increase economic development in the state and you would think it was just something we had discovered in the last few days or the last few years. Almost every individual who is elected to office wants to do something to bring new industry, new businesses to Nebraska. We have found that, and I have argued this in the past, that an adequate type of law to treat the laboring group of people fairly is important to industry who locates here in Nebraska. And I think that we know that we have had businesses, industries, come to Nebraska, review our situation, they like our labor people, they like our climate, they like many things they see here but sometimes they do not like the kind of statutes we have. I think Nebraska has come a long way toward providing a decent climate for the laboring man and I think that we should continue to try to provide that kind of climate. I have argued also that as an individual whose business is the production of food, that when an individual loses their income because of an injury, the first and only thing that they can really cut down much on is food because their fixed costs of housing and other costs are tied in pretty close to a fixed amount so they cut down on food. So Nebraska, as a food producing state, does benefit from having a decent type of workmen's comp figure. I want to point out also, however, that what we do on this floor does send a signal to business and industry and many of the candidates who are now out on the hustings talking about how they are going to bring industry to Nebraska will, when they have the opportunity to vote on this floor or to operate in the northeast corner of the Capitol, support legislation which does not bring economic development to this state. I am going to have to oppose the bill at this time and I do so reluctantly because of some of the reasons that Senator DeCamp has outlined. I prefer to keep the control with the Legislature. I think that we have heard people talk here about how this will automatically raise the rate. I would suggest that it may not do so, it may not do so in the future. I would suggest that unless the economy of the State of Nebraska turns around, the average weekly rate may actually decline. There are some who think that can happen. I have made a suggestion. I have done it on this floor. I have done it in writing and I have suggested that there not be a 3 percent increase in state employee wages this year and, in fact, that there may be instances where layoffs are going to be necessary and there may even be reductions. I have had individuals come to me and say, if we can keep our