

some language on page 11 of the main amendment, AM3382. And the language that is there allows for pretrial conferences and also for the assigning of staff personnel to hold pretrial conferences and when I was involved in discussions with the judge of the Workers' Compensation Court he indicated that he probably had a need to hire some people to do these pretrial conferences. My concern was that I didn't want the court, I didn't think it was appropriate for the court to be coming to the Appropriations Committee next year and asking for more personnel in a situation where, in my opinion, they already have too many personnel for the job that they do, and by that I don't mean that the personnel are not working. I simply mean that that whole court is structured in such a way that you have essentially an appeal and a review within the Workers' Compensation Court before you ever get to the appeals court and the Supreme Court. So this amendment doesn't guarantee, but I have assurances from the judge that if we drop this language that that will not mean that there will not be pretrial conferences in some cases when it's appropriate and when they have personnel to do so, but they will not be coming to the Legislature for additional personnel or additional judges by virtue of the changes or for the reason of the changes being made in LB 360. So that's the intent of what I'm trying to do. Thank you.

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Beutler. Senator Coordsen.

SENATOR COORDSEN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, members of the body, I rise to support the Beutler amendment as he very, or explained very well this takes out the pretrial conferences. About 10 percent of the cases that appear before the court are brought by people who are unrepresented by counsel. Judge Novicoff has assured me that out of the current resources of the court they will make sure that those people understand the processes that await them should they continue to go through on a pro se basis. This, by the way, does take out any need for any appropriation and reduces the fiscal impact of 360 to zero as far as the fiscal impact is concerned. I think it is a good amendment. I believe it will work this way quite adequately so I would encourage your support of the Beutler amendment.

SENATOR WARNER PRESIDING

SENATOR WARNER: There's no further lights. Senator Beutler, do you wish to close?