

anything. They do not...they are not required to meet and the body has already stated that we're not going to require them to meet. That's not the intent of this Legislature to require safety committees to meet. The intent of this Legislature is simply to put in place a program that, by god, establish that committee and then after that point whatever. If you want to use it, great; if you don't want to use it, well, that's good too. And that's what the intent of this legislation is. The safety committees simply are not required to do anything, they're not required to meet, they're not required to make any recommendations. The employer can't take any action for somebody serving on the committee, but other than that the employer is not bound in any manner whatsoever. These safety committees simply do nothing. From what I've been reading in the paper and in fairness to those representatives of labor who have been speaking in the paper, I understand you don't always get quoted correctly, but I have seen that the big selling point here is, boy, we're going to have safety committees. But look at the statute. Look at what this statute says safety committees do, and you simply see nothing. This...we sometimes hear about creating a skeleton and allow the departments sometimes to put in the meat. We haven't even created a skeleton here. But, number two, we haven't assigned any rule-making authority or regulation-making authority to any department at all. This is it. What you see is what you get and I hate to use computer terminology there, but that's it. I believe this is a cruel joke on the workers of this state to require that in exchange that the workers who are already getting better benefits, who are already getting higher wages, to require the little guy to trade away his or her work comp rights for the benefit of those who are already getting paid more and what the only, only possible thing they could be getting out of it is a safety committee structure...

SPEAKER BAACK: One minute.

SENATOR LINDSAY: ...that simply has no enforcement mechanism, has no requirements that they meet, has no requirements that an employer even recognize that such recommendations have been made. There is nothing in the statute that requires than an employer even pick up a report before pitching it in the waste basket, pick up the report on the safety committee and look at it. It is simply a farce. What this amendment seeks to do is to recognize that and say let's get back to what we're really dealing with, we're trading away higher benefits for all this