

set of amendments into four pieces and adopted two of them. We should be entering that discussion that revolves around the use of the independent medical examiner that is followed by a section of amendments that deal with the benefits that workers will get. Since I last talked to you senators, well, Senator Abboud, in particular, and I have been working at trying to find some middle ground. He has a package of amendments to the bill which I'm in a position to try to review with him and make sure that we have a shared understanding and, if we do, I would be...attempt to accept those amendments. They include some amendments that Senator Beutler had wanted earlier on. They were amendments, three of the amendments which I previously gave notice to the body in a piece of paper I sent around about ways of closing the gap between us. I know that there are a number of amendments up there from my colleagues. I'm hoping that they will, for the most part, be withdrawn, they will be able to accept the Abboud amendment and my guess is that by the time we adjourn tonight perhaps we'll be onto the benefit section of the bill and prepare for whatever awaits us tomorrow. The issue that we're about to take up is the independent medical examiner. This is a concept in which disputing parties who have not settled their issues can use an independent medical examiner to help narrow the gaps. Now, it can come about in one of two ways. If both parties agree to the use of the independent medical examiner, their decisions are binding. In the event the independent medical examiner is not agreed to, then at the point at which the two parties go to court, prepare for their dueling doctor situation, the court, on its own motion, will utilize an independent medical examiner, that information, as well, will be before the court, hopefully, that should solicit some settlements and some reasonable offers, and the two dueling docs and the independent medical examiner will have their information before the court and then the court will make an eventual ruling on what is appropriate for that disputed case. The independent medical examiner needs to be an expert in the recognized field that is at issue. The independent medical examiner, which is used by the court on its own motion and selected by the court, is drawn from a preexisting list of doctors that the court has already approved to be independent medical examiners, and that's the general gist of the amendment. I know that there are a number of amendments to it.

SENATOR HALL: Thank you, Senator Landis. Mr. Clerk, amendment to the amendment.