

with an instantaneous accident, joint, whole body, that sort of thing, that the benefits in faster settlements, less litigation, receiving the total amount of your whatever weekly benefit that you're entitled to, in addition to 100 percent of your medical claims, should provide those workers that Senator Chambers is concerned about with a considerable number of benefits. Yes, the weekly benefit will stay the same, because nationally two-thirds of a persons' take...a persons' gross salary is generally regarded as take home pay, it's nontaxable. So that's pretty much of a standard figure. But if you have to share that with someone else, then it becomes...

SPEAKER BAACK: One minute.

SENATOR COORDSEN: ...something less than two-thirds. I don't know that it will work 100 percent as we hope, but I hope it works for all workers. Thank you.

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

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Mr. Speaker and members of the Legislature, when Senator Landis and Senator Coordsen, to a lesser extent, were talking about nonmonetary benefits, I would have to put that in the context of an injured worker, one who is injured now and encountering difficulty in dealing with the employer even acknowledging that the injury is worked related, and maybe the company doctor not wanting to concede that the injury or illness is as severe as it really is, at that point that worker would feel no benefit or mitigation of his or her condition because a safety committee exists, because with all that was done by the committee the injury nevertheless occurred, or some of the things that Senator Landis talked about in terms of an expanded workforce, even a diminution in workers' comp premiums for the employer, that doesn't help the injured worker who is encountering difficulties. What I would like to have seen, and I talked to Senator Landis about it but naturally got nowhere, was to not use the two-thirds of weekly wage as the maximum benefit for people who are employed and make a small amount of money. Senator Coordsen, what I would like to have seen was in some circumstances, and we would have set a weekly amount, the person would get twice the minimum wage as a benefit for lower employed...lower paid people. There is no way that any benefit will ever accrue to those people as long as they don't get up here in the stratosphere of nine ninety-five and above. So, with all of the discussion of benefits, the only real one that