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LB 647

have earnings and 65 becomes less and less of a dividing line or a watershed year in our individual lives, and it may well be that the older line of 75 becomes the more of a watershed year. It is an attractive bill and I have concluded within my own mind that in the end I am going to support...I am going to support the Governor's amendments with an amendment, and that amendment will be discussed a little later on, and that amendment simply is to reduce the \$40,000 figure to \$32,000. That is the concept that I intend to support. But the disadvantages of the Governor's proposal and the disadvantages of Senator Labeledz's proposal are these. When we are a need based homestead program as we are, we still don't look at all the money that a family has to spend, that a family has to live on. We don't look at that Social Security income in ascertaining the homestead allowance. We don't look at that railroad retirement income in ascertaining the homestead allowance. We don't look at tax exempt interest in ascertaining that homestead allowance. And as you all know from newspaper accounts recently Social Security income and railroad retirement income is all indexed to cost of living and, in fact, is rising at a far greater rate these days than are the wages of the wage earner who is less than the age of 65 and who will have, if he has respectable wages, no homestead allowance whatsoever, and I have been very disturbed by the fact that we will not in any need based program take into consideration all the monies that a family receives. Now the Revenue Committee has a bill, 608, which will be considered later this afternoon, which would examine all monies coming into a home in ascertaining the homestead allowance. Probably this is a better bill for the State of Nebraska. On the other hand, I have to take into consideration political realities, and political realities are that we have gone down the road for years and years and years with a homestead program that does not look at nontaxable income, and to make the change to look at nontaxable income in ascertaining the amount of the homestead allowance will undoubtedly pain and hurt many people, many fine people, and it may be that that is not what we can at this time in our history do. It is for that reason that I have decided that I will support Governor Thone's amendments, but let me tell you one more fact. I have concluded that I cannot support the amendment at the \$40,000 ceiling, and the reason why is because in looking at homestead allowances throughout the United States, I have learned that Nebraska has one of the most generous homestead provisions in the nation, and for us to raise the present ceiling of \$25,000 to \$40,000 continues our generosity, and in particular it continues our generosity to a select group of people, a fine