

March 12, 1981

LB 138

So I would oppose the bill and I ask that it be defeated.

SPEAKER MARVEL: Before Senator Vickers makes his presentation, in the north balcony from Senator Maresh's District we welcome thirty-six 4th Grade students from Geneva Elementary School, Geneva, Nebraska, Mrs. Joan Higel, teacher, and Mrs. Grace Kotas, teacher. Will you raise your hands so we can see where you are? Okay, welcome to the Unicameral. Senator Vickers.

SENATOR VICKERS: Mr. Speaker and members, I am a member of the committee that heard this bill and also the bill of Senator Labeledz that follows, and I voted to advance both bills. And I will tell you, quite frankly, that I agree with a lot of what Senator Schmit said and a lot of what Senator Lamb said. Probably this one doesn't stand much of a chance. But I do think and I really and truly believe this that it is important that we give the people of the State of Nebraska an opportunity to make a choice. Of course, they can make three choices. They can make the choice of not increasing the salaries in any way, shape or form. Or they can make the choice of increasing the salary in a set figure in the Constitution. Or they can make the choice as Senator Johnson has brought forth giving us the opportunity to set it with a lid based on the Governor's salary. But I do think it needs to be pointed out that Senator Lamb mentioned that this would, in fact, give us an unlimited....the sky is the limit, opportunity to raise our salaries. I guess I have more faith in this body than that. There are times, I will admit, when I think this body is perhaps not as responsible as I would like, just as the members of the general public sometimes feel that way. But in general I think the 49 members of this body are pretty responsive to the public. Senator Schmit mentions that we should get home more often, this is a citizen Legislature. I noticed the roster indicates that there is very few members of this body that considers that a state Senator is their occupation. I certainly don't consider that, and I don't think many others in here do. I go back home and I am a farmer. When I'm here I am a farmer. I happen to be representing that group. I think we are a citizen Legislature and I think it is important that we remain one, but I also think that as a citizen Legislature we are responsive to those people and I am a little bit upset when anybody even indicates that we would raise our salary if we had the opportunity to to a level that nobody could appreciate or nobody could afford. I don't think that's true. There are some members of this