

March 25, 1981

LB 111

increase. So I think we are doing a terrible injustice to the judges and to the citizens of the State of Nebraska when we tie all of the salaries to one salary. I ask you to oppose LB 111. Thank you Mr. President.

SENATOR CLARK: Senator Schmit.

SENATOR SCHMIT: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, I want to rise in support of LB 111. I will tell you very frankly I have no conflict of interest when it comes to the supreme court. I think I have had as many of my bills declared unconstitutional as any one person in this body. But I would just like to say this. For many years we have operated on the premise that if we pay people for a qualified position that we will get people who do a good job. It doesn't make any difference in this body if we enact all kinds of legislation if the court does not enforce that legislation. We need to attract the kind of people who will do a good job. It is not popular today, you can stand up here today and become a hero by talking against this bill. You are not going to save enough money if it was in one dollar bills to stuff a muzzle loading shotgun. But the point is this. Inaccurate interpretation of the law can be very costly to the State of Nebraska and to the individual citizen. I recognize Senator Chambers' concern when he speaks from a position which is well known and he has a very good background for his concern. I would like to see, very frankly, a supreme court salary that would be somewhat commensurate with the kind of salary they could earn in private practice. Anyone of us who has ever reviewed what happens to an estate knows that anyone of those men who sits on the supreme court could earn as much money from one single estate as he earns in an entire year serving on the court. I think sometime we are going to recognize that the judiciary will become one day a thankless position. I know and I have differed many times with their interpretation of the law, but I have not yet lost my confidence in that ability to interpret the law. I think that we need to compensate these individuals commensurate with the responsibility that they have and hope that we will find willing persons to fill those positions. I know that there have been times when very few people have applied for the various positions of county judge, for example, yet many of us will never appear in any other court than the county court. I think that we need to attract the best people and I think we can not do that unless we follow something along the line which Senator Chronister has in his bill. I would hope that you would advance the bill. I would hope that you would take a good long look at the judicial salaries and that you would act responsibly because I believe that the responsibility rests with us. Enforcement of law rests with these judges. Without having the best minds available