

March 30, 1981

LB 78

SPEAKER MARVEL: Senator Higgins.

SENATOR HIGGINS: Mr. President and Senators, I campaigned and pledged my support for the Senior Citizens throughout my district. I did not know Friday that the Senior Citizens were in favor of this until two Senior Citizens approached me Friday and asked me to vote for public radio. So I had to explain to them that there is only so much money in the state and as a representative of the Senior Citizens I think we ought to get our priorities in order, and I would rather see Nutrition Sites for those who are going hungry than free radio or public radio. I would rather see policies that will help the homemakers stay in their own homes when they are elderly and give them support in that way rather than force them into nursing homes because we don't want to give them an extra hundred dollars a month to keep up their own homes. And these two ladies I feel went back realizing that they have to get the priorities straight first, what is absolutely necessary to maintain body and soul, and I think the Senior Citizens if they stop and realize you cannot ask for everything, that you can only ask for those things that are really needed, that they too would change their minds about public radio. I know when I go back to my district I am going to tell the Senior Citizens I am voting against LB 78 and supporting the kill motion because I want to see Senior Citizens given the things that they need to survive and public radio is not one of them. In regards to Senator Chambers' argument that public radio is the only place where we will get programs that we do not get now on radio, many, many years ago I was a mail clerk at WOW radio and TV, and when the people in Omaha found out that Bishop Fulton Sheen was being televised in other states, they wrote letters to WOW TV asking if they would put him on in Omaha. As a result of public demand, Fulton J. Sheen was then on television in Omaha, and I maintain that the people that are saying today that we need public radio because it will be an educational thing, if there were a demand of it, commercial radio stations would realize the value of it. It would be a lot easier to sell advertising to business men, if they could walk in and say, here we have got a thousand requests for a program on Biology, or Science, or whatever it is public radio purports to put on to educate the masses. When it comes to radio free Europe, I think the value of that speaks for itself when you all reflect on what Europe thinks of the United States today. Thank you, Mr. President and Senators.

SPEAKER MARVEL: Senator Vickers.