

April 1, 1982

LB 761

you vote you will consider the people that are working here at the state for \$580 a month. Thank you.

SENATOR CLARK: Senator Newell. Senator Kahle.

SENATOR KAHLE: Mr. President and members, I support Senator Fenger in his honest, forthright approach to meeting our problems that we have in the state today. As far as the morale of the state employees is concerned, I know it is not good. Mine is not good as a farmer, and certainly those people that are unemployed, it's not good. Many, many people in our state have taken a reduction in wages. I was talking to the....many of us were out to dine with the building...the people that do our construction work, our homebuilders, a couple nights ago and I asked about the cost of building a home today. They said, well it is considerable less than it was last year. I said, well is that because of the material going down or what? No, they said, we can hire people for less money. So I think we are in a different time in history and I don't like to see the employees get less than they did last year or no more than they got last year. We are just not used to that kind of society. Most of you that are younger than some of us in here have never seen it happen. If you didn't get a raise each and every year, you were just nobody. You just never cut it. That's all there was to it. But those of us that are a little older know that there were times when you did take a decrease and you lived with it. I think we are in that stage of our economy right now and I would rather not put a hoax upon our state employees and tell them, well you are going to get a raise and then not be able to give it to them. So I support Senator Fenger. Let's wait till the first of the year. That is what the Governor wants to do anyhow. If our economy straightens around like many hope it will, we can take care of it then. I know you are going to say, well, we won't do it. I, for one, will vote to raise their salary for the last half of the year if our economy turns around. I would be glad to. So I think we need to look at this in a realistic way. I am not sure the state is going to have the money to do very much. We can raise the sales tax and we can raise the income tax and neither one of them may bring in one dime more money than we are getting right now. I think that is an honest to God fact. The State of Nebraska runs on the economy, nothing else. If you don't pay sales tax and you don't pay income tax, the state is just not going to have any money. So I support Senator Fenger with his amendment. Thank you.

SENATOR CLARK: Senator Howard Peterson.