

April 6, 1982

LB 761

SENATOR CLARK: Do you want to ask him that now?

SENATOR HIGGINS: Yes, I would like to know, Senator Lamb, if it is going to be necessary to cut Senator's staff, what criteria will the Executive Board use to decide which Senators are going to have their staff cut?

SENATOR LAMB: Senator Higgins, the process in the past has been that the Senators who are not committee chairman have a legislative aide plus an administrative assistant. Then those who are chairman of major committees have four people and then there are a couple of the one day committees who have three people instead of four. So the Executive Board would have to look at that whole picture and decide what kind of changes would have to be made if indeed there are some changes to be made.

SENATOR HIGGINS: In other words, you wouldn't start at the bottom and say then a Senator who has one administrative aide and one legislative aide would have to give up one or the other?

SENATOR LAMB: That may or may not be the situation. In the fairly recent past, Senators who were not committee chairmen had administrative assistant plus one half of a researcher. In other words, they had to share it with someone else.

SENATOR HIGGINS: Thank you, Senator. I appreciate the answer and, Senator Clark, I appreciate the opportunity to finally being able to ask the question.

SENATOR CLARK: Senator Chambers.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Mr. Chairman and members of the Legislature, this is a serious issue and I don't think we ought to consider it as not being very important. We have to look at what would be fair for every Senator here. There is not strictly a seniority system in the Legislature. There is favoritism which is shown and there are cliques that take charge of things and when it comes to equipping offices and providing this and that, some people are favored and we know that. But here is what has to be done when a policy is being established, we cannot start out with a policy which is crippled from its inception. We could not say that because somebody has been here as long as I have, for an example, I should be entitled from the ground up to more legislative staff than somebody who gets elected in the coming election. Everybody has to have the opportunity to obtain whatever help is needed. So if we start out and know that there will not be enough

10274