

April 6, 1982

LB 761

SENATOR CLARK: Motion lost. Next amendment.

CLERK: Mr. President, the next motion is to return LB 761 to Select File for specific amendment and that is offered by Senators Chambers and Beutler.

SENATOR CLARK: Senator Beutler.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Mr. Clark, the amendment that I put on there is mistaken in that it should have been \$100,000 instead of \$150,000. If it is all right to make that change, I will proceed.

SENATOR CLARK: We can make the change.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Okay, Mr. Speaker, members of the Legislature, as you are aware as part of the Warner amendment we dropped \$200,000 out of the legislative budget, money that was budgeted for legislative staff, and as Senator Lamb very candidly indicated to us, he thought that that change might very well and probably would cause a policy change as far as the staff allotments for the Legislature is concerned. And I feel very strongly about this issue for a number of reasons and for that reason I am proposing to you this amendment which would restore half of the money, would restore \$100,000 of the \$200,000 that was deducted. So that is what the amendment does. It is a little uncertain, I suppose, as to whether the \$200,000 reduction would in fact effectuate or cause a change in legislative staff policy but for myself I don't want to take any chances in that regard. I feel very strongly that the Legislature has moved in recent years to become a much more professional and more independent functioning body and it is that in part because we have sources of information that are independent sources of information and which respond to us personally and respond to our committee chairmen personally. And without that independent source of information, we are a much less effective Legislature and I think we need to do everything possible to protect the present staffing patterns of the Legislature and be sure that each one of us has the ability to investigate, to research, and to come to independent conclusions on behalf of our own constituents on the various issues that flow in front of us. We all know that there are too many issues, there are 500 or more every year, it is murder just trying to keep up with those issues with the staff that we have and most of us don't do it, honestly speaking. But we don't do it in part because we don't have the resources to do it. So I am asking you to restore \$100,000 to keep the minimum resources that we have so we can continue to do the minimum job that we are doing. I think it is very