

April 16, 1982

LB 488

we do not know if the economy is going to go back up again or it is going to continue its downward trek. If it should be continuing its downward spiral, then we certainly do not need to increase the disparity between the upper echelon employees and the lower level employees. I believe it is wrong to do it at this time. I recognize the problems that those employees will have to face, but I think the constitutional officers which are drawing salaries in the almost middle five figures to at least upper level of the average of state employees of the State of Nebraska certainly are not being asked to sacrifice that much. In no way do their sacrifices compare to the employees who draw perhaps \$900 or a \$1000 a month. So in view of that I would ask you to sustain, support Senator VonMinden in his attempt to strike the enacting clause from LB 488. Again I thought perhaps someone else might comment. I believe the Governor does have the ability to separate the two to sustain the raises for the judges, for example, and delete the raise for the constitutional officers. Or he could do it in reverse, whichever he felt was the more adequate. But at this time I want to reemphasize once more that salaries from 30 to 40 thousand dollars certainly at least pay for the cost of living. This is not true of many of our low paid employees both in government and out of government across the State of Nebraska who have had to make substantial sacrifices and will be called upon to make substantial sacrifices in the future. I support Senator VonMinden.

SENATOR LAMB: Senator Higgins.

SENATOR HIGGINS: Mr. President, I am between a rock and a hard place because I was for the judges' salaries and I am for the constitutional officers' increase. I think these people deserve a raise and I think the Governor would deserve a raise if all he got was \$40,000. And if it weren't for the fact that our Governor, and next year I fully expect it to be a Governor of my political persuasion, if our Governor didn't get free housing, free utilities, free automobile, free gasoline, free oil, free auto maintenance, free maid, free cook, free chauffeur, free social secretary, I could without any qualms at all vote for an increase for the Governor because he doesn't make as much money, if you look at just the salary, as the Omaha Public School Superintendent gets, and I think the responsibilities of the Governor are a lot more. But when I add up all the fringe benefits the Governor gets, I just can't vote for that. I say this fully expecting either Bill Burrows or Bob Kerrey to be the next Governor.

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