

me about the inadequate salary of the Attorney General and I believe that even today with the salaries we have proposed for the Attorney General that that salary is not adequate. I think that, as you can see, and we know Mr. Spire is leaving the office, there are not very many persons who have aspired to that office and I think that is indicative of the fact that the salary is perhaps not conducive to bringing to that office the kind of experience and the kind of dedication that we would like to have there. I know that as we discuss this issue here this morning there will be some arguments made in support of the bill. There will be some arguments made in opposition to the bill. There will be good arguments made on both sides and I ask you...and I encourage full debate. I think it is important that the public understand that this is not an issue which this Legislature or that myself or Senator Ashford or others, Senator Kristensen, Senator Landis, all many of whom are interested in this bill, take lightly. We consider the salary bill to be an equitable one. We appreciate the fact that the Judiciary Committee did, I believe, put it out in the manner in which it was introduced. I believe they put it out without a dissenting vote and I think that that's important. I just want to call your attention to some of the competing salaries that we have to look at when we adjust these salaries for our judges. The Dean of the UN-L Law College earns \$115,000. The U.S. Court of Appeals judge earns \$102,500. The U.S. District Court judge earns 96,000. The U.S. Magistrate earns 88,000. The Douglas County Attorney collects \$82,700. I could go on. And I want to just say this, the fact that some of these positions command a certain salary does not automatically, does not automatically ensure or guarantee or qualify any other position for a specific salary. But I think it does us some good to realize that the highest court in Nebraska at the present time, the judge of the Nebraska Supreme Court, draws a salary of \$66,689. Now all of us work every day with many fine lawyers. We work with them as individual lawyers. We work with them as friends. We work with them as lobbyists. We work with them in many capacities. I think we recognize that \$66,000, although it is a lot of money, is not a lot of money for a well qualified, dedicated attorney. I know that there are many attorneys in this state whose incomes are many times that and would never consider sitting on the bench and who many not consider sitting on the bench regardless of what the salary is. But I can tell you also that I know of attorneys who would not take the appointment because of the salary limitations. There are also many other requirements that go into being a judge and I think we all recognize that. But