

when you get before a judge, when you get before a court, you hope that you have before...that you are before an excellent mind. You hope that you are before a man or a woman who is well educated. You hope that you are before an individual who has a broad base of experience. We hope that you have...we hope that you are before an individual who is knowledgeable in the law, knowledgeable in life, knowledgeable in the practice of his profession and to do that you are going to have to pay those individuals. The Supreme Court...the Chief of the Nebraska Supreme Court, Norman Krivosha, left the bench and as a relatively young man, and I am sure we all recognize that he would perhaps have still been there had the salary and the compensation been different. I think that we have today, we have an excellent court. We have a wide variety of judges. I believe that we have seen an improvement in the bench in the 22 years that I have been in this body, and I believe a part of it is due to the fact that this Legislature has seen fit to adjust salaries and to try keep salaries somewhere compensable with the profession and the demands of the profession. I do not believe we will ever get those salaries to the point where perhaps some individuals would like to see them. We will never get them to the point where they will be truly competitive with the outside world but they should at least be in an area where the individuals feel comfortable. And I can tell you very honestly that I believe this bill does that. There are all sorts of other ideas relative to what should be compensable. I am going to not mention it here today, but I would just ask you to go back and review the improvements we have made with the state employees in the last few years, the improvements we have made to salaries at the university system. And when you do that, I think you will recognize that these salaries are a modest increase. I want to point out also that the total amount of money is not that substantial. If you raise...if you were to raise these salaries by this amount, the total amount of the money is not that significant. What is significant to me and I believe to you and to the people of Nebraska...

PRESIDENT: One minute.

SENATOR SCHMIT: ...is the type of justice and the type of performance you receive. I know there will be...there will be people who will be able to cite examples where they feel perhaps the system hasn't worked. In that case, I want to say all the more reason to have a competent, capable individual on the bench. And I can tell you, very honestly, that I think we have