

reprehensible and I shall fight this bill to...not my last breath, because I'm not going to die over this but I'm going to fight it hard.

PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator Hefner, please. Did you wish to speak about the Haberman amendment?

SENATOR HEFNER: Mr. President and members of the body, I rise to support Senator Haberman's amendment. I think it's more realistic. As the bill is originally proposed, if my calculation is correct, and if it isn't, I would like to have somebody correct me, but I believe that this is over a 50 percent increase in the period of three years, over a 50 percent increase, because we're taking the Supreme Court judges from 63,513 to 96,204. Senator Chambers, is that right? Okay, about a 51 percent increase. Okay. Okay, I think that's too much. And I don't have anything against the judges. They're doing a good job. But I don't think the State of Nebraska can afford a 51 percent increase over a period of three years. If we give it to the judges, then the university professors will want more and it will just trickle down and down and down. And here we have only been able to give the state employees a 3 or 4 or 5 percent increase a year. When we have a vacancy in the judgeship, whether it be on the county level or district level, we don't seem to have any problems. I know in my area we have...we usually have seven or eight of them that apply for it. So we can't say that we have a shortage of attorneys that want to be judges. It's a prestige job. And then along with the increase in salary, well, the fringe benefits will go up. The retirement program will go up and our judges have a very good retirement system that some of the other people don't have. So I just say consider all those when we're voting on this amendment and on this bill. But I think that the Haberman amendment is more realistic, it's more down to earth. As I understand it, Senator Haberman, is that right, you start out with a 7 percent increase the first year? Three sevens. Okay. I just think that that's more realistic and I would urge your support of the Haberman amendment.

PRESIDENT: Thank you. I would like to direct your attention to the back of the room for a moment. I have been asked to announce that Senator Lindsay has his wife there, Mary Beth, and their newborn son, John William. So if you would like to have a look at mother and baby, go to the back of the room, please. Senator Korshoj has some guests from his district. Under the