

April 9, 1990

LB 42

CLERK: Mr. President, Senators Lindsay and Chizek would move that LB 42 become law notwithstanding the objections of the Governor.

PRESIDENT: Senator Lindsay, please.

SENATOR LINDSAY: Mr. President, I would yield my time to Senator Kristensen.

PRESIDENT: Senator Chizek, please. Pardon me, couldn't hear you. Senator Kristensen, please.

SENATOR KRISTENSEN: Despite the fact of being severely offended by that misidentification, Mr. President and members...

PRESIDENT: Well, you look alike. (Laughter.)

SENATOR KRISTENSEN: Mr. President, I don't know if we can censure you but what a way to start. We have a real problem. Senator Chambers is going to stand up in a little bit and let's see what is he going to tell us? He's going to yell, judges don't work, judges wrong me when I go to court, they don't give me a fair shake because they're just poor people, they're vindictive, they're ignorant, they're sexist, they're gender biased, and he's going to stand up and give you the same verse, second chorus of every other time he's done it. And you're going to sit there and go, do we have to listen to this again? Well, that's up to Senator Chambers, but I'm sure he'll say that to you. Well, what's the real problem, the thing we need to look at? Inadequate pay scales are undermining our judicial system by keeping the best qualified people away from the bench and it's going to get nothing worse. In the mid-1970s we ranked 24th in this country in judicial salaries, right about where you and I would like it to be because we consider Nebraska about in the middle and that's really the goal we have been after. But in the last 15 years we have fallen from 24th to 44th. And we had a bill in here, LB 42 to raise the judges' salaries and a very kind Senator Hefner and a very unwilling Senator Chambers saw the light and decided to make an amendment. And you will remember that fabled coalition that came in here and cut that in half. And the Legislature decided that that was fine, we'll do that, because it's tough to raise salaries for somebody who rules against you every now and then. It's tough to raise salaries for people who have to make hard decisions and

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