

May 3, 1995

LB 490

CLERK: Senator Vrtiska would move to amend the bill. (Senator Vrtiska's AM1385 is found on page 1808 of the Legislative Journal.)

SENATOR CROSBY: Before we continue with that amendment, I'd just like to make two quick announcements. Senator Engel has his daughter, Kathie Meyer, here from Omaha. She's under the north balcony. Would like to have you welcome her. And earlier Senator Jones had Larry Shepperd, Jim Cook, Ruth and Frank Gessner from Mills, Nebraska, here as his guests. Thank you. Senator Vrtiska, on your amendment.

SENATOR VRTISKA: Thank you, Senator Crosby and members of the body. I just am... my amendment 1385 is a amendment that I've already discussed with Senator Kristensen and what it would do is lower the salaries of the member of the commission that's created by LB 490. The way the bill is currently written, the members of the Tax Equalization and Review Commission would receive an annual salary equal to 85 percent of the Supreme Court justices. Under AM... under my amendment the changes to those salary would be as follows: The chairman of the commission would receive a salary equal to 70 percent of the justice salaries, while the other two commissioners would receive a salary equal to 50 percent of the justice salaries. In dollars and based on the current salaries of the Supreme Court, the bill currently would provide a...the commissioner a salary of \$74,933.67 per year. In comparison, under my amendment the salary of the chairman would be \$61,710.08 per year and the salaries for each of the other two commissioners would be \$44,078.63 per year. The reason the chairman's salary is higher in the bill, the bill, as it's currently written, requires the chairman to be an attorney and I guess, in reality, I have to understand that a full-time attorney wouldn't take this... wouldn't take the position for the salary that... that I have set out for the other two members. I'm sure if you read the bill you understand what the... what the duties of the other two commissioners will be. They were somewhat in the vein of a assessor and I'm not sure what all assessors in Nebraska get but many of them don't make 44,000 dollars a year and so I'm trying to get somewhere in that range for these other people. I'm bringing the amendment because I feel that, while Nebraskans are interested in improving our tax equalization process and certainly that's the purpose of this whole process that we're going through, they're not interested in those improvements