

PRESIDENT ROBAK: The Chair recognizes Senator Avery to open on his amendment.

SENATOR AVERY: Thank you, Madam President. What... I have an amendment that basically cuts this increase in half. In terms, what Senator Maurstad has done with his amendment is provide a two-step process. The first year it would go from 37 to 41 and the second year from 41 to 45. What I, I guess am proposing in terms of the budget situation that we have, those type of increases, I think we'd better advance very slowly, cautiously and my amendment allows the one first year and does not automatically give an increase in the second year. That's basically what it does. In looking at these type of increases we, as I had said, we have to be careful and look at what those costs will be. Now it has been stated to me that there isn't increased costs, but I had a bill that we looked into all of the publications. We're in this communication era now and there are other means and in a way I propose that we... I'd like to see some kind of an interim study on how we can better provide communication in terms of these publications to all of Nebraskans. Maybe it's using Internet more in terms of publications. The other thing, newspapers have the ability to use advertising to raise and cover a lot of their costs. I don't think the state should be helping or subsidizing in terms of providing... making sure these papers continue in business. If they are poorly managed, it's just like any other business. We have to be careful if we're subsidizing for that reason. So basically again, my amendment allows the first increase from 37 to 41 and doesn't automatically... or eliminates the second year increase and with that I'll... like to listen to some of the debate and ask for your support. Thank you.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator Avery. Senator Beutler would like to recognize the doctor of the day today, Dr. Robert Wergin of Lincoln who is serving as the family doctor of the day on behalf of the Nebraska Academy of Family Physicians. Dr. Wergin is under the north balcony. Will you please stand and be recognized, please. Senator Vrtiska, to speak to the Avery amendment.

SENATOR VRTISKA: On the bill.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Senator Kristensen, to speak to the Avery amendment.