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or how much money do you have in savings, or other items like that, you would not be at all inclined to make public confession. And legislative compensation, I think, falls into that sort of an area, in that legislators historically have presented to the public an image of low esteem of themselves in an attempt to appear conservative. Senator Kristensen spoke, I think, to an area that we should consider more than what we sometimes do. The legislative branch of government does create all of the taxes for all levels of government. It does create all of the authorization for spending for all levels of government. It does create all of the controls, i.e., statutes and laws, that govern society's relationship one person with another. It does provide all of the guidelines for both the executive branch and the judiciary that exist outside of the framework of the Nebraska constitution. In essence, there is no more important elective office, in my mind, in the state of Nebraska. And yet, we're not inclined to voluntarily recommend that the compensation for a Legislature be...legislator be set that it is an open area of service for all Nebraskans. I am committed to the belief that a low pay, a low compensation for legislators, narrows the pool of human resources, people who not...perhaps may be interested, but simply cannot afford to be part of the system. And the lower that pay is, the more protection there are for incumbents. Our system must fall someplace in the middle between too low and too high. I don't know where it falls, because you look in the years that I've been here, we have seen a continually shortening of the length of service of members of this Legislature. Now, that is not by itself necessarily bad.

SENATOR CUDABACK PRESIDING

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.

SENATOR COORDSEN: But if you speak to people as to why they are leaving the Legislature, for the most part it has nothing to do with their pride of service. It has to do with not being able to afford to be here. Senator Kristensen and I and the Exec Board are presenting to you two options this morning. But I, quite frankly, believe both should be offered to the voters of the state of Nebraska in a special election determined to be the next primary election. I think they're both good ideas, and I