

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office

May 6, 1999

LR 5

and I think it was excellent research that was done by Stephen Moore, but at...on question 2, it talked about how many times has the Nebraska Legislature attempted to change the constitutional provision that establishes the amount of senators' salaries, and the answer is 35 times. How many times has it been successful? Five times. So it takes about seven, an average of seven times before you're finally successful. I shudder to think that that could be true in this case. I hope that it isn't. But we may have waited way too long to start introducing the idea of a salary increase. Second point I'd like to make is, I wouldn't have any problem defending to my constituency the \$24,000 figure. They may have a problem with it, but I don't have any problem trying to defend it. As I look at these states where there were pay raises in 1999, Arizona went from \$15,000 to \$24,000; California, which is way out of sight, went from \$78,000 to \$99,000; Colorado from \$17,000 to \$30,000; Connecticut from \$16,000 to \$21,700, almost \$22,000. So if you look at this chart on the handout, you'll see that there were some significant leaps in a number of states. But again, part of that is because, in Colorado for instance, the last time they did have a pay raise was 1985, so it's been a significant number of years. Same thing with Arizona, they hadn't had an increase since 1981. So I don't think that I personally at least would have trouble trying to defend that figure. I'm not certain that I think that is the best method to approach the public with. And one of the things that I would call your attention to, and I'm not if Senator Kristensen has already mentioned it or not, but he does have an amendment to this filed which is another approach, which is more of an indexing approach. And I don't know if we'll get to talk about that today or not, but I think that might be a preferable method of going. The other thing I...the final thing that I would like to mention and that I would like to make certain that everybody understands is that our constitution has definite language about what happens if there are conflicting measures on the ballot and they both pass. And what the constitution says, in that case, the one receiving the highest number of affirmative votes shall therefore become law as to all conflicting provisions. And I think Senator Jones was talking about, if they both pass that one could go into effect right away with the indexing, and then the commission could take over. I don't think that's the way it would work. I think it's the one that would have the highest