

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

March 30, 2000 LB 825A, 956

LB 825A.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: The bill is advanced. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: Mr. President, LB 956 was a bill introduced by Senator Schimek. (Read title.) Bill was introduced on January 5, referred to the Government Committee, advanced to General File. I have no amendments to the bill at this time, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Senator Schimek, you're recognized to open on LB 956.

SENATOR SCHIMEK: Yes, thank you, Mr. President and members of the body. This is a bill which has actually been before this Legislature before. In 1993 this Legislature passed this bill with 40-some votes, I don't remember the exact number, but then Governor Nelson vetoed it. And this bill is all about salary increases for the six constitutional offices: the Governor, the Lieutenant Governor, Secretary of State, Treasurer, et cetera, Public Service Commission. As you all know, there is a constitutional provision that says that we can only increase a salary of a constitutional office at the next full term, so that means we can't actually impact constitutional salaries until 2003. If we don't do something before then, it will be 2007 before we can actually raise the salaries. The last pay increase for executive branch officers was in 1990 and that was LB 503, which again had to pass over a Governor's veto in order to become effective in 1991, and that was Governor Kay Orr vetoed that particular one. So you can see that we don't have a real record of Governors approving their own salary increases. I think that generally what's had to happen is that the Legislature has decided that is the right thing to do and then have done it. The bill actually increases the salary for Governor from 65 to 85; Attorney General, 64.5 to 75 thousand; Secretary of State from 52 to 65; Auditor of Public Accounts, 49.5 to 60; State Treasurer, 49,500 to 60; Lieutenant Governor from 47,000 to 60,000; and Public Service Commission from 42,000 to 50,000. Now I have to tell you that the committee spent a great deal of time looking at other options, you know, percentages of judges' salaries, on and on, all kinds of different options, and in the end it was decided that this was the most politically feasible, the most understandable and