

SENATOR BARNETT: Mr. President, I move for the adoption of the amendment. Do you want to read the amendment or do you want me to explain it, Vince. I can explain it just as easy.

CLERK: They are meaningless to read it.

SENATOR BARNETT: OK. The adoption of this amendment...

CLERK: (inaudible) read it if you want to.

PRESIDENT: Stand by. There is a request to have it read.

CLERK: Read amendment.

SENATOR BARNETT: Mr. Chairman, what this..and members of the Legislature, what this amendment does is that it takes care of what I think is an inequity in the classification and pay plan that was adopted by the Department of Personnel that we approved. This affects 211 State Patrol troopers. This moves them up one step in pay grade. There is a vacancy in pay grade C-12 or C-13 and it moves them from 12, where they are at, to pay grade C-13. It affects 211 of them and I think the biggest thing that we should point out and I am sure there will be somebody point at different things but the one thing we should point out about this pay grade change is the fact that when this study was done and this was adopted. The pay grade is set up on a 40 hour week and as you know the State Patrol works 50 hours a week, plus the fact they work alone most of the time, if not all of the time. The troopers that patrol the states and the highways in the state of Nebraska at the present time are classified in this group of people; liquor control inspector, revenue enforcement agent #1, a correctional officer lieutenant, supervisor of group living, and a state patrol. By moving them up one step to try to close the gap between some of the law enforcement agencies around the state of Nebraska would require a total outlay of about \$78,000. That's what this amendment is for. To give you a little comparison, the State Patrol now starts at \$615 and a policeman in the city of Omaha starts at \$735, \$120 more a month and usually they work together. I think that this is an important step for these people. I think it is a necessary step for these people and I think it is time that we started taking this in hand here in this Legislative body for some of these inequities that are bound to happen through studies. Therefore, I move for the adoption of this amendment.

PRESIDENT: Senator Marvel, did you wish to be heard on this amendment?

SENATOR MARVEL: I take the position of explaining opposition to this motion, explaining why, and then leaving it up to the Legislature to decide what they want to do. I am not speaking against the Patrol, against salary increases, I am speaking against a piecemeal approach of changing a pay plan which hasn't even started. There is nothing perfect about the pay plan, I am certain of this because we have already run into a number of objections and it took us a long time and a lot of studies to come up with any kind of a pay plan and I am not this sold on this pay plan but we have got to start someplace and we've got to try and I think, frankly, we ought to give the pay plan a chance and then come back here a year from now and clean up the inequities. If you start making changes before the plan even takes affect, I don't know where you are going to end up because I am certain there are other amendments to change other sections of the pay plan. Therefore, the only thing I can do is to report to you based upon the background that we have, some of us have received and this goes back over several years. You've got to give some pay plan a chance to start operation. That's what I think we should do and therefore, at the moment, I think we should reject any attempt as enticing as it may