

There are those who would say it is cheaper for me to stay down here than to go back to the farm, but I happen to need to go back to the farm overnight, and is that trip back to the farm considered to be an unnecessary expense of my being in the Legislature?

SENATOR HOAGLAND: Senator Schmit, I would not think so. I would think that those gas expenditures would clearly be related to your duties as an officeholder. Now this language is general. This language is straight out of the federal statutes that attempt to deal with the same problem. The language is very general. I am the first to admit that. If there are any specific questions about where it applies in an individual situation why we have a mechanism for getting an advisory opinion.

SENATOR SCHMIT: Thank you. It has been my experience, and I have asked for a number of advisory opinions relative to this type of expense. I have read with some interest the various expense accounts that have been filed by various individuals, and I would just like to say that almost any expense, whether it is buying flowers for someone's funeral or whether it is handing out football tickets to a campaign worker, almost all of these expenses have been construed as being ordinary political expenses. So what we are doing is we are just about opening up the gate and letting everything go through. I don't think we are gaining a thing by the use of the accountability law. I think we are compounding the problems and I think we are making it more and more of a farce really when it comes right down to it because I don't think the commission is going to disallow anything in the way of an expense that an officeholder submits.

PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes Senator Fowler. Senator Fowler, did you wish to speak?

SENATOR FOWLER: A question of Senator Hoagland.

PRESIDENT: Senator Hoagland, will you respond?

SENATOR FOWLER: Is it your intent to indicate with this amendment that it is proper for officeholders to privately raise money to pay for the public expenses of their office?

SENATOR HOAGLAND: No, no it is not, Senator Fowler. There is nothing in the statutes that addresses that issue.

SENATOR FOWLER: Well, do you think it would be...do you think then that it is proper for us or for city council members, or