

just like with those basketball playoffs, I feel that my constituents and the other people around the state only pay attention to the Legislature during the last few days of the session where we decide the most important measure and that is the budget measure. Now today, in the next couple days here, probably today, we're going to be ending up on LB 722. We're going to decide whether we're going to increase taxes or whether we're going to leave taxes as they are and as far as I am concerned the people of this state will decide whether we've had a successful session on these particular measures. This will be the bottom line. This is where they'll say the Legislature, well they held the line, they realized the farm economy was tough and they held the line for us and they helped out all those rural sectors and all those people that are having their wages cut and all the unemployed and all the businesses. They said, we're going to hold the line. Or else they are going to go and they are going to say, the Legislature is doing the same thing they do year after year after year, increasing the budget, increasing taxes. You have a decision here to make and the people are going to be watching you. Thank you.

PRESIDENT: Senator Hefner, main motion.

SENATOR HEFNER: Mr. President and members of the body, I want to talk about this two percent cut. This isn't a two percent cut from last year's budget. This is a two percent cut from the Appropriations budget and let me tell you this, a lot of departments won't be even taking a cut from last year's budget. And, Senator Marsh, we are having rough times. If you don't believe it just come up to northeast Nebraska. I just visited with a couple on the phone this morning that was ready to file bankruptcy. We've got small businessmen going broke. You can drive through the town of Wayne, Nebraska, and see ten empty storefronts and if you come up to the smaller towns, their proportion of small business closing is even larger than Wayne. We are laying off employees. They don't have a job anymore. And so I say to you this morning, it's time to bite the budget, time to bite the bullet and cut the budget and it's not an easy task. It's a painful decision. You're doggone right it is and I do admire the Appropriations Committee for coming up with another \$10 million reduction in their first budget, but it's not a cut. It's not a cut from last year's budget. I think that we need to get that message across to these members here and also to those in the Rotunda. I