

January 10, 1986

SENATOR MARSH: Thank you, Mr. President and members of the Legislature, and especially Senator Withem. I was the member who was on the east coast and they tried very hard to find me, and had I been found would have brought me back. For that reason, I do not support Senator Withem's amendment and I shall support the proposal which has been discussed by Senator Morehead. Thank you very much.

PRESIDENT: May the Chair ask again what page of the Journal those options are on? The Chair recognizes Senator Haberman. Amendment on the desk.

CLERK: Mr. President, Senator Higgins would move to amend the Withem proposal by striking the language "at the expense of such absent member."

PRESIDENT: Senator Higgins.

SENATOR HIGGINS: Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I will be brief. I can support Senator Withem's amendment or proposal as long as we do not make the member who is absent pay the expense "themselves" of returning. It would have cost me about \$900 to come back during that special session if I had to pay my own way. Again, as I say, I had absolutely no way of knowing when I was already overseas that we were going to have a special session. Now I'm in full sympathy with bringing members back to the Legislature. I know that the special session we had in November that one member missed half of the session and bragged that during that time he had made thousands of dollars in his private business while we were here fighting and struggling to find \$40 million for the state budget. I don't think that person had a legitimate excuse to miss that special session simply because they wanted to stay home and make money. If that is their criteria for being a state senator, they ought not be here. They ought to just say, I'm not going to be a senator, I'm going to run my business. So I can see saying, yes, let's make them be present, let's make them accountable to their own district. But I cannot see making the senator pay their own expense, especially, as I say, if you don't even know there is going to be a special session. But as you recall the one that I missed was only seven days, and the one that we had to deal with on the \$40 million was almost...well, it was almost three weeks I think. So I would support Senator Withem's motion if my amendment to take out "at the cost of the member" is accepted. Thank