

40 hours a week, they have been out campaigning for election. So I cannot justify giving them an increase in salary because all state employees have received them. Remember, state employees have had their salary increases delayed many times by our Legislature, again on the argument that we need to tighten our belts. The Appropriations Committee is going to be cutting many programs this year. Anybody who wants to be state treasurer, anybody who wants to be governor, anybody who wants to be the auditor, the attorney general, secretary of state, they know today what the salary pays. The argument that giving them higher salaries will draw a better class of people, better educated, better informed, says something about all 49 of us because our salary is \$4,800 a year, \$400 a month. So if you accept that argument this Legislature has got the poorest representation in the whole state if you accept that argument. If we are here for the money only I can't believe it. I ran for this office knowing it was 4,800 a year. I did not know how much it was going to cost me to be a senator, to commute back and forth to Omaha, or to pay for motel bills, and food.

SPEAKER NICHOL: One minute.

SENATOR HIGGINS: But the constitutional officers and the governor live right here in Lincoln. They don't even have the expenses we senators have. I think it is a slap in the face to the taxpayers to say let's give an increase to the people who are running for office today, or who are already in office, and at the same time tell the people, no, we're not giving you any property tax relief like we did in the special session, we did away with the property tax exemption that we had voted in 1984 when 25 of us were running for reelection, we've put it off again. How many times are we going to lie to the people? How many times are we going to tell the people tighten your belt, cut your budget, but at the same time those who can well afford to run for office, those who live in Lincoln, those who are supposed to be working 40 hours a week and don't, we want to increase their salaries. I will speak against this on Select File, if it advances today I will speak against it on Final Reading. I will continue to speak against it as long as this state keeps having a budget crunch and as long as we keep cutting necessary programs...

SPEAKER NICHOL: Time.