

situation and with the state colleges. Higher education has been hurting and they have had severe cuts in the budget the last year and those faculty are wondering about where their future is. And they have talked to me and they have talked to you probably about what they ought to be doing and they have looked at other states. They have looked at other areas that are providing higher salaries and they have been lured away in some cases. But a lot of them remain and they remain here because they believe in Nebraska. They believe in our state and they believe that things will get better and this indication of a 3 percent salary increase, again, shows them that there is hope, that even in these hard times that we are going to provide a small salary increase and we are going to try and keep up with the marketplace and as times get better we are going to hope to do even better, hopefully, to reward them for their service to the state. And that is good management. That is wise management and that is in our best interests for all people, taxpayers and public employees alike, to have a system where we look at the marketplace, come up with salary survey, know basically what we have to do to be compatible and then go forward as best we can under the budget to keep pace with the marketplace and then again to recognize the service performed by these people and to say that that is a job well done and we are going to reward you for that and provide you with a salary increase. And so I strongly urge you not to support the Schmit amendment and to go forward with the salary increase.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Remmers, then Senator Hefner.

SENATOR REMMERS: Mr. President and members of the Legislature, I rise to support Senator Schmit's amendment. I believe that my record will show that I have been in favor of fair pay for employees. I think, as a school superintendent, we had one of the best salary schedules in the State of Nebraska in a small school and yet we competed with the largest ones. I think it would show that I have been concerned about good salaries because a school the size where I was superintendent you don't get those salary schedules up at that level without the superintendent working for it pretty hard. So I take credit for most of that. I have never really felt that state employees were overpaid. But we do have a situation where today where farmers have their backs against the wall. A large part of the farm economy is in trouble. I originally have been