

sorry. I'm sorry about that.

SENATOR SCHMIT: Mr. President, members of the body, I do not want to take a lot of time. I will not do so. It is not my style and I'm not very good at it. I don't like to do things I'm not good at. I just want to caution all of you again, you have embarked upon a procedure and upon a path here...

PRESIDENT: Call of the house is raised.

SENATOR SCHMIT: ...which has said in effect we will do that which the telephone companies have mandated us to do. We have taken our advice from the companies, we have ignored that of the customer and the consumer. Now that is all well and good if you believe, in your own conscience, that that is what you should be doing. And I would not ask you to do otherwise. I would only suggest this, that in the length of time that I have been here, I've been on this floor many times, I've spoken to you many times. I do not believe I have misled you. I'm not doing so now. I'm telling you that what you have done is that you have adopted a procedure which is going to eventually relate to much more expensive telephone service in the State of Nebraska. You have embarked upon a procedure for which there is no model, for which there is no manual. You have, in effect, turned the industry over to itself for regulation. If you really believe that the industry in this instance is capable of self-regulation, then continue to proceed in the vote as you have done thus far. If, on the other hand, you believe that the State of Nebraska is ready for a 50 percent increase in their telephone rates average across the board in the next 5 years, then continue to vote for the bill, continue to vote yes. Now if you really believe that then you believe differently than I do. Remember, you are doing that at a time when the economy is in a depression, when other entities and other businesses are being forced to curtail their expenses. It is kind of interesting, isn't it, that we have said we must all cut back, we must all cut down, we must reduce our expenses, but we are giving a green light. We are sending a different signal to the utility which is almost a requirement for us. It has become a requirement in many instances. It is a situation which we cannot provide our own competition. It is a situation where we must accept the service as provided. It is kind of interesting that I notice we had in our own telephone booths, the last few days, new telephones. During one of the Public Works Committee hearings I commented about the fact that the legislative telephones were of much less quality than those in the