

budget. At the present time, as I understand it, this coming year they asked that the Governor's budget which the Governor projected for them, be utilized as opposed to any additional legislative examination of their budget because they are willing to live within those guidelines. This Commission has been efficient and could be a prototype, could be an example to other agencies as a model of the kinds of efficient operating that are possible in state government and yet this body wants to hold them at not only what is not a fair rate by other standards in other states but is not a fair rate by what we pay hearing officers in other departments, but also doesn't even measure up to entry level wages for a starting attorney in this state. I think that is certainly unfair. The figure \$200 is by no means unremarkable. It is still a conservative figure given the kinds of work they do with other states in this area. One of the factors involved with the setting of the salary of a judge is that you cannot raise the salary once they are in a term of office. You may raise their salary only once every four years for their term of office and that is why there has to be a relatively large increase percentagewise infrequently, but that is because we don't raise them 8, 10, 12 percent at a time like we do other state employees. So the analogy that Senator Maresh makes simply doesn't hold water. We are not talking about an employee whose wage can be increased every year, but who can only have their increased salary revitalized or added to rather once every four years. With the kinds of progress this Commission has made, the kinds of work they do, we need the most efficient, we need the most qualified people we can get. They have proven up to us. They have shown us the kind of efficiency we would like to have throughout state government and I think we should return in like measure a fair compensation. I support LB 188 as it is written and I oppose the Maresh amendment.

SPEAKER MARVEL: Senator Kahle, do you wish to speak on the bill?

SENATOR KAHLE: Mr. Speaker and members, I want to support the Maresh amendment. I think that we are all talking about funds and where they are going to come from and what we are going to do about the increased costs of all state agencies and employees. I too think that 20 percent increase is sufficient. Many, many of our people are working and sacrificing somewhat in a job because they want to do the job and they want to do it well. I think a good example of that is in this very Legislature which