

County District Court have the highest caseload of any judges in the state. Mr. President, I renew my motion to advance LB 89 to Enrollment and Review Initial.

SPEAKER MARVEL: Senator Vard Johnson.

SENATOR VARD JOHNSON: Mr. Speaker, members of the body, although it pains me, I am going to rise in opposition to Senator Marsh's bill, not necessarily because the bill itself is a bad bill but more importantly because of what I consider to be the timing of the bill and the methodology that is being applied. Last year as a freshman Senator I had to listen to Senator Cullan initially and then to Senator Dworak plead for two additional judges, one in Senator Cullan's District and the other one in Senator Dworak's District, and the thing that distressed me during the course of the debate was the fact that I basically had to deal with those two districts in a vacuum with the two proponents saying simply, "You can see what our caseload need is and, surely, there is a demand here, and you, fellow Senator, should go ahead and approve the judge." Well, I was struck during the course of the debate by remarks of Senator Beutler from Lincoln who said, "The Bar Association and the Judiciary Committee need to undertake a fairly thorough study concerning the actual drawing of the boundary lines for these district court judgeships because" said Senator Beutler, "as I look at the overall state statistics it become painfully clear that there are some judicial district that may have more judges per filing than other judicial districts, and surely in terms of economy and efficiency and cost savings, we can take a hard look at the way our district boundary lines are formed and then determine whether or not we need to add additional judges". And I thought that was a pretty wise course of conduct. On the other hand, here were Senator Dworak and Senator Cullan in saying the demand, the need is now, and we should act now. So I went ahead and supported it but one reason why I supported their bill was I had the impression that in fact the Bar Association and the Judiciary Committee were going to undertake such an investigation. To the best of my knowledge, it has not occurred. Now looking at my black book, I see that Senator Beutler has introduced a bill, LB 386, which is designed essentially to restructure our judicial district boundaries and the restructuring calls for the movement of some counties from one judicial district into another judicial district. Essentially it is designed to provide for economy and, frankly, to assist us as legislators in knowing how many judges we really ought to have in the State of Nebraska and where those judges ought to be located. Now I can't tell you definitively.