

and Senator Warner has also met with the League of Women Voters and discussed with them their petition drive to try and place on the November ballot a salary increase for State Senators. Now when a petition drive is initiated to place on the ballot a change in the Constitution, it's got to be in the General Election so they have no choice but to place it in the General Election. So the feeling was if we had two competing constitutional amendments dealing with the salary issue for State Senators, there may be some confusion and some difficulties, and so the discussion was we should place one and only one on the General Election ballot and that if the Legislature wanted to propose an increase in salary, the best way and most appropriate time to do that was on the primary ballot. Now the situation is this, the League is ready to move ahead with their petition drive. They have gotten a number of groups interested and they need to go ahead from the Legislature as to what direction we want to take. The direction I propose to the Legislature is that we place LB 138, which would set the salary at one-third or less of the Governor's salary, put it on the primary ballot and then let those in support of the petition drive decide on which approach they wish to take and initiate their petition drive in the very near future and start to collect signatures to place it on the November ballot. I think this is the wisest approach for the Legislature. I believe that if you look at the handout that Senator Johnson provided for you, it indicates that time after time when we proposed an increase in our salaries the people have rejected it. I think that Senator Johnson's approach which is different than any previously attempted may be more successful in the primary, but the fact remains that it is even more beneficial to have the citizens from the grass roots support such an effort and to indicate the fact that the general public is most harmed by the salaries not the members of this body. It's not those of us in here that are suffering from the low salary that are really hurt by the fact that we don't get paid adequately, in fact, it is the general public who is hurt by this and it's been recognized by many groups and that's why they are leading this petition drive. So I think we want to encourage that and we encourage that by changing as this amendment would propose to place this question on the primary ballot and allow those in support of the petition drive to place their question on the November ballot.

SPEAKER MARVEL: Senator Schmit. Senator Newell.

SENATOR NEWELL: Mr. President and members of the body,