

March 12, 1981

LB 138

sent over to the Governor and was declared...or he vetoed. So, I think if we want to do it, I think we should put a figure on it, eventually we will get it, not as quick as we would like maybe, and get back to work and quit wasting our time. We hurt ourselves every time we talk on one of these bills more than five minutes.

SPEAKER MARVEL: Senator Koch.

SENATOR KOCH: Mr. Speaker, I move the previous question.

SPEAKER MARVEL: Do I see five hands? Okay. All those in favor of ceasing debate vote aye, opposed vote no. Yes, sir. Have you all voted? Record the vote.

CLERK: 25 ayes, 0 nays to cease debate, Mr. President.

SPEAKER MARVEL: Debate has ceased. Okay, Senator Johnson, you are closing on the motion to advance the bill.

SENATOR JOHNSON: Yes, I guess this will be my for real closing. I thought I was closing about two other times but I was obviously mistaken. The thing that...I suppose the thing that really makes me despair over the quality of debate on this bill is the despair and cynicism among our members. Very clearly our members say the voters are going to do it to us one more time, and, you know, we just say, well, that's the way it is. But let me tell you, ladies and gentlemen, the voters haven't done it one more time in a lot of other states in this country. This is from the recent publication by Allen Rosenthal, and you all know who he is. He is the head of the Center for State Legislatures in Rutgers, New Jersey, the Eagleton Institute of Politics, called Legislative Life, and he writes about salary for legislatures and he says, "One strain that many legislators endure is a financial one. Outside of a few of the larger states salaries provided for legislators are not high. Many members could earn more practicing law, selling insurance or in business. In view of the earnings they forego and the time they put in on the Legislature, many feel underpaid." Now here is what he says, it's important. "The salary situation for legislators used to be much worse. Until lately, the Constitution of most states set the precise amount of a legislator's salary or set maximums. To raise a salary the Constitution would have to be amended. Now the situation is different. In 35