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LB 111

SENATOR HOAGLAND: Mr. President and colleagues, I have prepared a statement to make in support of this bill but obviously it is not appropriate to do that at this time. I think we have heard from a lot of people and it is quite clear what the issues are and many of us would just as soon have the vote and vote for the bill. Let me just make a couple of remarks. Let me say that this is an important bill. It is important that it pass as written. I would commend Senator Chronister for bringing this bill to our attention and I think that it is important to understand that what this bill does is simply stabilizes the salary relationships among the judges so we don't have different groups of judges coming in at different times for different types of salary increases. It is intended to put an end for once and for all to the fighting among the judges themselves as to the relative degrees of their salaries from one group to the next. This is not an issue as to how much they should be paid. We will confront that issue in future legislatures. This is just an issue to set out an appropriate percentage schedule. I think it does that and I would urge the advancement. Thank you Mr. President.

SENATOR CLARK: Senator Vard Johnson.

SENATOR VARD JOHNSON: Mr. Speaker, members of the body, I have been very troubled as to whether to support this bill or not because I think it is an important concept that people that provide a major function to the state i.e. the distribution of justice, which is what our courts do, have to come periodically before a body to justify their actions which of course is what judges do have to do when they do request salary increases. Now, I don't think that the legislature has ever demeaned the judiciary in terms of examining its conduct. But I do think that one of the functions that we have in passing on pay raises or pay requests, it does give us an opportunity to have a dialogue with a co-equal branch of government i.e. the judiciary. So it seems to me that it may be to the advantage not just to this legislature but to the people of the State of Nebraska for the legislature to periodically visit with the judiciary over a matter of real concern to the judiciary, their pay. Now, if we pass this legislation, then our visit really only takes place with the chief justice and the members of the supreme court because all of the other salaries will follow whatever we provide the chief justice. It may well be that at the given time we really will want to have a dialogue with some municipal court judges or some workmens compensation judges or some district court judges or a juvenile court judge because you and I and the