

If the actions of one court would discourage a salary increase, all courts would suffer together. LB 111 would naturally cause all the other courts and the Chief Justice to pressure the offending court to clean up its act. Presently, if one court does not perform satisfactorily, the natural tendency is for the judges of the other courts to say to the Legislature, don't give the salary increase to that court, give it to us instead. The current law is a disincentive for the various courts to think of themselves as a single unified court system. LB 111 is directed at rooting out one of the most negative aspects in the relationship between the judiciary and the Legislature. We know that the spectacle of judges of different courts separately lobbying for pay raises tarnishes the dignity of the judiciary. But let us not forget that it also tarnishes the dignity of the Legislature. We must do our part to eliminate each and every impediment to attracting lawyers of the highest quality to the bench. Our present system is a message to the judges that they must lobby the Legislature and fight among themselves for their salary. Such an atmosphere could discourage many of our best attorneys from considering becoming judges. We owe a duty to the people of this state to do our part to provide a judiciary of the highest quality. The present system of setting judicial salaries is a retreat from this duty. Some of you seem concerned about how we can deal with misconduct by individual judges. If an individual judge misbehaves, a complaint can be lodged with the Judicial Qualifications Commission. This session we also passed LB 475 which implements constitutional amendment number two adopted by the voters last fall. With these changes the Commission is empowered to impose a broader range of sanctions on individual judges who fall short of the standards the people demand of their judiciary, and then, of course, the electorate as always can vote against retention when a certain judge's term expires. I urge you to support the advancement of LB 111.

SPEAKER MARVEL PRESIDING

SPEAKER MARVEL: Senator Dworak.

SENATOR DWORAK: I opposed the bill before, Mr. Speaker and colleagues. I oppose the bill now. I think Senator Chronister makes a point the fact that he is hoping with this particular bill the judiciary will check themselves rather than the Legislature whose normal, legitimate, constitutional responsibility is to check them. I can stand the heat. I can take a look at each class and each type of judge. I can make that decision based on each type