

take over the municipal judges' salaries at the state level, I think we'll have several municipalities wanting municipal judges that don't now have them. I urge you to support the kill motion.

SPEAKER MARVEL: The Chair recognizes Senator Landis. Is Senator Vard Johnson there? Yes.

SENATOR V. JOHNSON: Mr. Speaker and members of the body, I would urge you to reject Senator Haberman's kill motion. This bill is being advanced not for the purpose of providing economic benefits to the City of Omaha or to the City of Lincoln but rather to continue the orderly progression of assuring that all systems of justice in our state are financed by state dollars. We began the progression back in 1972 when we eliminated the justice of the peace system and we put all JP functions under a totally revised county court system. Now at that time there was considerable dialogue regarding the municipal courts and the Legislature then decided that given the difficulties in making what was a really fundamental change it would be better if the issue involving municipal judges was left to another day and so we did leave it to another day. And now the day is beginning to arrive though with this bill it still doesn't fully arrive. This bill does not make municipal judges county judges. It merely provides that the cost of municipal judges will be borne out of state coffers as are the costs currently of every other judge in the State of Nebraska. Once that particular step is taken within the next year or two we will undoubtedly have all of the mechanisms prepared for consideration by this body for making municipal judges county judges. And then we will have in place in our state a three tier system of courts with the first tier being the county court system, the second tier being the district court system and the final tier being that of the Nebraska Supreme Court. I think frankly it is incredibly important for us to recognize that the dispensation of justice is one of the very fundamental issues for any state. It is not a local question. It is a state question. One of the basic functions of our constitutional system of government is to assure that justice will be provided by the state itself. Our Legislature over the long pull has seen fit to work toward this goal. It has seen fit particularly through removing the JP function and transferring it to the county court and this is the second major step in that direction. At this juncture I would like to yield if I might, two minutes of my time to Senator Beutler.

SPEAKER MARVEL: You have thirty seconds left.

SENATOR V. JOHNSON: He may compress.