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LB 603

SENATOR NICHOL: Senator Cullan, in the second part of your amendment do I understand that you want to reinstate those percentages as they were in 111?

SENATOR CULLAN: Exactly.

SENATOR NICHOL: Yes, Mr. Speaker, see that is the part that we are talking to secondly. So I would suggest that we talk to the portion of the amendment to the amendment that say 5% increase the first year plus 5% increase the second year. That would be the first part of the amendment to the amendment.

SENATOR CLARK: All right. Senator Landis, do you want to talk on the first part of the Cullan amendment?

SENATOR LANDIS: Mr. Speaker, members of the Legislature, I support the Cullan amendment and, in both halves, I support the 5% raise which I hope is clear to all of you because it begins January 1 in fact amounts to a 2½% increase for that fiscal year rather like what we expect to be doing with the situation of public employees, state employees, delaying the increase. Why treat two years in a row? Why not bite the bullet, if you will, as Senator Kahle suggests. First of all, judges are public officials and are bound by the rules that we are in that their salaries may not be raised mid-term for their yearly work. In other words, they can't have an annual increase like state employees can, or the employees of cities and public schools and the like. They have to be raised on a basis of the beginning of a term of office for a judge which is why you have to treat them at a minimum of a two year cycle. The increment increase that Senator Kahle would be willing to vote for in this case and then not allow the percentage increase in the future probably is not shared with by the rest of the body and unfortunately I don't think we are in a position to be able to ask the public coffers to underwrite, beginning today, the rates that you would also find to be legitimate in 1984, which is what we are doing in this bill. I think it would be hard to say that we would start paying now the rate which we also think would be reasonable in 84. I think that is the virtue of the escalator in that second year when we can't legally raise their salaries as we can public employees in that same year. One question that you might ask yourselves are the kinds of functions that are performed by these people and how important they are. I would suggest that they would stack up very well against any other form of responsibility that we pass out as a people to our representatives. Because of the vote