March 29, 1982

LB 603

wage but I would have to agree with Senator Kahle that first of all I cannot go for a builtin increase. Number two I believe that at a time when we are asking the lower paid state employees not to accept a raise, in fact perhaps even to face the possibility of some layoffs and some maybe even decreases, I think it would be extremely difficult to go back and suggest that there are just a few persons whose salary at the present time, although maybe inadequate, is going to be raised, I think is wrong. I think the economy is wrong for it. I think the situation throughout the state is wrong. I think as Senator Kahle has said we are building in inflation and we have heard elected persons from the federal level, we have heard the administration boast about the fact that inflation is now level, we almost have zero inflation. If that is the case, then why should we build an inflationary impact into the economy in a position where if there is anyone who can get by, our honorable judges can get by. I know that there are men there who could earn far many times of what they are earning in their present position. So could some of us. At the present time my salary here is the best salary I have had all year so I am not going to complain but I want to point out that there are many people today who are out of work. In the City of Columbus I have been told, 24% unemployment. It is pretty difficult to go back to Columbus and tell those people back there when I face something like that that we still found it necessary to increase the salary of the Supreme Court judges. I recognize the constitutional problem. I wish it did not exist but we face that same problem in other areas and we survive. I think that if we approve this kind of a raise, we are not going to be able to tell anyone "no". I think we are going to have to say "no". The economy is in bad shape. Unless someone will accept some of those suggestions that have been made from time to time about how we can improve the economy, get people back to work, get things moving again, we are not going to have an improvement in the economy. It just so happens I think it is a mistake not to let those bids for highway construction. There is \$50 million laying there that ought to be cranked into the economy and go to work. With that thing being delayed, there are thousands of construction workers who have done nothing wrong who are not going to draw a paycheck at all for several months at the very best and I think that it is not consistent with good...

SENATOR CLARK: You have one minute left.

SENATOR SCHMIT: ...government at this time to come in with a pay raise. I think it is absolutely irresponsible. I have talked to members of the judiciary who have agreed with me. Of course, they don't want to make their names

9604