

judges and so on and they come up with a point system and that point system will determine where the judges are to be placed throughout the state. So this legislation is not going to pinpoint where a particular judge is going to go. There are other people that are going to speak this morning about the number of cases and why we need two more judges. Basically, as a final point, the State of Nebraska is divided into 21 judicial districts and in those 21 judicial districts we have 48 judges. This bill merely increases that number to 50. Thank you.

PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator Lindsay, please.

SENATOR LINDSAY: Mr. President and members, I rise today in support of LB 147 and going I guess a little bit further in depth unto Senator McFarland's arguments to point out that since the last time a judge was added to the district court system there has been an increase of about 18 percent in the number of cases. Statewide there were 23,750 cases filed in 1980 and approximately 28,000 in 1988. This does represent an 18 percent increase in number of cases. What we're seeking here is a 4 percent increase in the number of judges. A more dramatic increase has occurred in Douglas County. Douglas County's caseload since the last time they received an additional judge has increased 58 percent from approximately 6,000 cases in 1972 to 9,500 cases in 1988. And it should be noted that cases since the last time judges were added, the cases have become much more complex. We're talking now about cases involving very complex medical malpractice which generally have jury trials and can extend two and three weeks. There is a rash of cases now I guess, approximately 500 cases in Douglas County that deal with asbestos, the asbestos litigation. Those cases it is believed will take 30 to 60 days apiece. If only 10 percent of those cases go to trial, it will take two to three years just to complete that area of trials. There is additional work loads on the district court judges besides just these complex jury cases that they do. These case figures that I have included do not include the reopened cases, for example, in modification of divorce decrees, in contempt hearings on child support cases and child visitation, child custody. These cases all are required by statute to be expedited and even those cases it is difficult to get the hearing dates just because of the enormous amount of cases being heard. Further, right now the Supreme Court, because of its backlog, is requiring district judges or asking district judges to sit in panels and hear some of the Supreme Court cases. There is proposed legislation before the