

SENATOR KRISTENSEN: But there will be the gap and you will start to have that gap.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: All right.

SENATOR HANNIBAL: One minute.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Mr. Chairman, and members of the Legislature, if Senator Hefner and my amendment is not adopted, I don't have a plan to offer any more attempts to amend this bill, but if Senator Hefner and my amendment is not adopted, I will not support Senator Baack's amendment, and I think there ought to be the effort to go ahead then and give the judges what they asked for. Let them run with the 20 percent, and then let all of those who vote for that gigantic increase explain and justify it in terms of how stingy we are with reference to other programs that are far more meritorious, if we are going to talk about the overall impact they would have on people in terms of numbers.

SENATOR HANNIBAL: Thank you, Senator Chambers. Senator Kristensen, your light is on, followed by Senators Haberman, Langford, Hefner, and Bernard-Stevens.

SENATOR KRISTENSEN: Thank you, Mr. President, and members. I want to go back and respond a little bit to Senator Haberman's comments about the number of people running, and I think that is correct. You can't equate the number of people who apply for a judgeship as to how attractive that may be in terms of quality of people applying. We don't have a scale that you plug in the judges into a little meter and you gauge them on them on the old quality meter. We don't do that for state senators. We don't do that for anybody else because you can't. You have got to rely on discretion. Now currently out in Buffalo County we have got a vacancy for the district judge. We have got only one application for that right now, and I am sure there might be one or two more, maybe, but I'll bet that we won't have more than three people at best to apply for that position. You really can't equate the number of people applying with the quality. Quite frankly anybody with some legal training could act as a judge. Obviously, with the less experience that they would have, the less education they have, probably the poorer quality of judge they would be but, by and large, they can at least go to court in the morning, be there on time, could read a few cases. They are qualified. They are a member of the bar. They