

PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator Chambers, please.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Mr. Chairman and members of the Legislature, on some of her vetoes the Governor has been as wrong as Jesse James, as wrong as she could be. For example, when she vetoed the money for the aging, but I know why she did that, she knew that when we got to the ADC bill old Chambers would stand up and say, she's taking food out of the mouths of babies, once again. She said that in her mind that by vetoing the old folks bill now she could say she's taken the food out of the mouths of old folks, too, so there is equality in the way she handles people. But when it comes to this bill, she's absolutely right. The structure of the judicial system is the cause of this problem. The Chief Justice is the administrator of the court system, and he can reallocate these judges. All of us know who followed this situation that there are areas of the state where the judges put in relatively small amounts of time every day. Chief Justice Hastings, next time I'm going to think about Senator Jackie Smith cause she lives in Hastings, then I'll remember by association. Chief Justice Hastings, if you ask him frankly, and I'm sure the Governor did, isn't part of this problem in fact the bulk of it based on the organization of the judicial districts and the fact that there is a lot of work in some parts and very little in others? And he would say, yes, as I'm sure he would have told the Governor, had she asked him. Now, if you look at these figures that were handed out to us, they show an overabundance of cases in Douglas County. For example, a direct quote from number one, Douglas County has over 30 percent of the state's population, 35 percent of the state's total caseload, while only 25 percent of the state's total district court judges. That's a problem for the Chief Justice to resolve. And the Governor's veto message is right when she says the structure of the system is what we need to look at. Douglas County will always be out of balance and they'll always be coming down saying put in more judges. And until you get at a restructuring of the judicial district system, you're going to have the same problem that you have when you talk about consolidating schools, to reduce those little districts, the total number of them. Every time we have something brought to us it's aimed at giving more judges and not looking at the entire system. So I hope that you will support the Governor's veto in this instance. You will notice how quickly, in the case of a person who is arrested and charged with sexual assault case, all 12 of the Douglas County District judges recuse themselves, and they quickly found a judge from outside Douglas County. For these other cases that