

committee bill, big bills, we all have them. Everyone of us have a project in our community, be it an institution, be it some state-funded project or be it a bill that you would like to see enacted that has an A bill. And this year with the amount of money as short as it is, I think everybody's going to take their own hit and their own cut and I'm willing to go do that with this bill. I'm going to cut the number of judges from nine to six. Now does this make good sense practically? Well, I don't know, you're going to have to be the judge of that. But I can tell you that the purpose is there was a study done by the National Center for State Courts, a national study that we didn't have to pay for, that came in and told us that we, in effect, might be crazy if we don't do and keep nine judges because it will work with three panels of three with a pending volume of cases coming in and that you cannot be able to, one, take care of the backlog but over a number of years be able to prevent a backlog from occurring. It will also give your court enough time maybe consider the more important matters, give them more time to reflect, give them a better chance to write better opinions and so on. Will the bill work if I take out the three additional judges? Yes, it will work. It won't work as well. The cost of this will be about a million dollars that will be saved over the biennium. There's a million dollar cut onto this bill. I don't want to do that. I still think in the matter, given the financial conditions of the state at this point in time, this is the practical thing to do, the wise thing to do and, with that, I strike the number of judges from nine down to six so there will be two panels of three. The second part that I do with this amendment is say, look, we still have got a problem with caseloads. The filing is going to continue to go up. I've passed out the projections that we'll see for case filings and that's on your desk right now. That projection shows that, by the year 2000, our filings will be up somewhere close to 1,700 filings in the appellate court and the Supreme Court. So what I do is I say, look, we'll take it from six to nine but we'll put in a clause that, as the case filings go up, we'll have the opportunity to appoint another judge. And my amendment is printed in the Journal, if you want to take a look at it. But what it says here that for two calendar years...and I select a base number, I picked 1,300 case filings, we have 1,270 this year, so I just go to the next highest number, 1,300, and say every time for two years in a row that you go 150 filings above that, so, in other words, 1,450 filings would have to occur two years in a row, then one more judge would come in. Now does that mean that we have to have the judge? No.