

being overly expensive. I realize that with this approach there are some costs incurred and it's probably wise to have these commissioners be full time. You'll have to also understand that under my amendment these salaries that I've set out did not include the benefits that would be provided to the members, which is normal under all of our elected officials or I guess most of them and obviously that increase in benefits is also going to be increased cost to the taxpayers. Based on the figures in the fiscal note, this amendment would save the taxpayers about 75,000 dollars a year in the beginning of the commission's life as compared to the way the bill reads now. I believe this amendment is a reasonable cost adjustment to the bill without hampering the commission's ability to perform the bill as enacted. As I said before, I've talked with Senator Kristensen about his amendment. I don't know that he has any problems with it and I just hope that you will consider this as a practical way to start this. I also have to indicate, as many of you know, that anybody that...this... this is basically what I consider a starting salary and obviously there are increases that will incur as time goes by and, in order to keep these somewhere in line, I thought this would be a good starting point. What my amendment actually does, instead of 85 percent, it lowers it to 70 percent and 50 percent, based on the two different approaches. In other words, the chairman being an attorney and having to spend more time perhaps in the adjudication of cases certainly is, in my opinion, would be entitled to more money. So this is what my bill does and if I have any time left I'll yield to Senator Kristensen if he'd care to make any comments.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Senator Kristensen, there's six minutes left.

SENATOR KRISTENSEN: Thank you, Madam President, members of the Legislature and Senator Vrtiska. He has talked to me about this and I... and I told him that I probably would vote for this amendment because I think what's going to happen is that every bill that sits on Select File right now you're going to have to look at money, and the policy choice is are you going to be able to attract somebody decent for 44,000 dollars? That's a policy choice. And I don't think that you'd be out of line by saying, well, we may not, but at the same time the realities of this Legislature are we have spending priorities and to that case I've done two things with this bill. Obviously, we're putting in if there's a lot of appeals with those small filing fees that are in there, that's going to generate some money to be able to