

was initiated. This is a situation where I don't think it's a drastic need right now. It needs further assessment. There's several questions that I'd like to ask the Supreme Court and it needs to be looked in by this body, by the Appropriations Committee, in terms of the need. It looks as though the Court of Appeals is going down the track to make sure that each judge has two people, two staff, plus now they want an attorney, a legal counsel, as the Supreme Court. There is a need, but the Supreme Court has said in an opinion that they, the Court of Appeals, isn't that important. So we...you know, you have to consider that and I think it's important that we seriously look at adding personnel. We continually get hit by state government growing, the number of people growing. Bottom line, what this does is for this year anyway eliminates the addition of two clerks and an attorney, which would be, I believe, the legal counsel for the Court of Appeals. I'm saying that they should dig down, utilize the resources in-house. They've overall, according to the September '95 caseloads, have a lower case, lower number of cases. Let's consider that before we jump into and say we need to add more people. Thank you.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator Avery. Senator Maurstad.

SENATOR MAURSTAD: Madam President, since he'll probably pull this amendment, I would call the question.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: There has not been enough discussion, Senator Maurstad. Senator Bohlke. Oh, light. Senator Wehrbein.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Madam Speaker and members, I'm going to rise to oppose this. The Appropriations Committee had many of the same questions that Senator Lindsay (sic) raised...Lindsay...Senator Avery raised about the need for this, the caseload. We've had some figures that showed that the Court of Appeals was making some progress on their caseload and then, if you realize in the last two or three months, those appeals have started going back up. Apparently, there are an increasing backlog of cases and if you look at...I should have probably updated from September '95 the ones that he passed out, but the thing about it is even if you look at those figures that were passed out, if you notice we're still quite a bit behind on the Supreme Court in terms of average days. It's dropped some, that's true, but we still have a year, well over a year, backlog and, as I said, those cases are starting to go back up for the