

Supreme Court. So whether we should be taking away staff from the Supreme Court in order to staff the Court of Appeals I think is still a question that is to be answered. If in fact that happens, next year we can do that. The real point is, I looked back, we have not increased, we've decreased actually the staff of the Supreme Court by one since 1988 and so that staff has remained relatively...or has remained steady in all those years. Now we have added the Court of Appeals. They have made some progress on caseload, but as I've said their caseload is going up. I talked to the administrator this morning, or at noon actually, found out if there is a need for adjustment, the Supreme Court makes those adjustment of cases, and I went back to July of 1995 up until today. July, they transferred 21 cases from the Court of Appeals to Supreme Court; August, 31; September, 28; October, 24; November, 52; December, 2; January, 1; and February, 35. So they are making those adjustments. They do have the statute authority to...statutory authority to control their caseload, whichever court that they decide and so that is a methodology by which they can control their caseload. I am reluctant at this point, and the committee was reluctant, to take away staff from the Supreme Court feeling that...and we did allocate three more to the Court of Appeals. They actually wanted four. The final settlement, we added two law clerks and one staff attorney so we did reduce their request. We do feel it's important to maintain the integrity of the court system by having...if we're going to have the Court of Appeals, then it ought to be properly staffed. Part of the situation is that we're at a time when there is increasing litigation apparently. Caseloads are increasing. If there's a way to cut that, then perhaps we ought to figure out more directly how to cut those costs of increasing litigation and reducing caseload, but if we're going to have the Court of Appeals and the Supreme Court, it appeared to the committee that we ought to be doing the right thing by those agencies and adequately and properly staffing them so that they can do their job well. Otherwise, we ought to be working on another area. So I oppose the...oppose the amendment by Senator Avery, feeling that in order to operate these properly, the staff was justified to us.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator Wehrbein. Senator Kristensen.

SENATOR KRISTENSEN: Thank you, Madam President, members of the Legislature. Senator Chambers, do you want me to give your