

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE  
Transcriber's Office

February 12, 1999 LB 350A, 839

ASSISTANT CLERK: 25 ayes, 0 nays on the motion to advance 350A, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: The bill is advanced. Mr. Clerk, LB 839.

ASSISTANT CLERK: LB 839 was introduced by Senators Brashear and Chambers. (Read title.) The bill was read for the first time on January 20, referred to Judiciary Committee. That committee reports the bill to General File with no committee amendments.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Thank you, Mr. Clerk. Senator Brashear, you're recognized to open on LB 839.

SENATOR BRASHEAR: Mr. President, members of the body, LB 839 changes the percentage of the salary of the Supreme Court which will be paid to county court judges. Under current law, county court judges are paid 85 percent of the salary of the Chief Justice and the judges of the Nebraska Supreme Court. LB 839 would change the percentage to 88 percent after January 1, 2000; 89 percent after January 1, 2001; and 90 percent after January 1, 2002. Currently, two years ago we increased Workers' Compensation Court judges to 92.5 percent of the Chief Justices' salary, and there was no demonstrable increase in their workload. We recently gave county court judges jurisdiction over domestic relations. That takes a burden away from our district courts, especially as it relates to protection orders, it increases the workload of our county courts. Our largest counties have separate juvenile courts. We pay our separate juvenile court judges 92.5 percent of the Supreme Court rate. In all of our other counties, other than those that have separate juvenile court judges, our county court judges, who are back at the 85 percent, are handling the juvenile matters also. That's a part of their jurisdiction. And we all know at least generally about the increase in juvenile matters. This is a change that needs to take place. For the county court judges with increased workload, increased responsibility to remain at 85, while Workers' Compensation Court judges have gone to 92.5 percent, separate juvenile court judges have gone to 92.5 percent, the district court is at 92.5 percent, in other words all other trial court judges are at 92.5 percent, there truly is no justification for having our county court judges back at 85 percent. All of the things which we said with regard