

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

May 6, 1999

LR 4

think they both should be passed out of this body and placed on the ballot. With that, Mr. President, thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Coordsen. (Visitors introduced.) Senator Schimek on the LR 4CA.

SENATOR SCHIMEK: Thank you, Mr. President, members of the body. I rise in support of both of these bills. I think Senator Coordsen's suggestion may not be a bad one. We maybe should take a look at giving voters some options here. But my preference, Senator Coordsen and Senator Kristensen, would be the commission form. I have been in this Legislature, along with Senator Kristensen and Senator Crosby and Senator Robak, I believe is all that's left of our class, we have been here for 11 years. And we were the first senators to come in under a pay raise, which, if my recollection is accurate, it had been 20 years since the preceding pay raise. They...and I'm not sure I'm accurate on that, but it had been a good long while since we had had a pay raise. We have not had a very serious consideration of this issue in all the years that I've been in here. We have had a number of bills introduced with a number of different options, but I don't believe we ever really took hold of something and said, we need to do something; it's our responsibility to do something. The problem for all of us is, of course, are, of course, the political considerations. It is...and it is difficult to vote to put something on the ballot that says, we think we need a pay increase. But I think after 11 years, the time has come to say, we value what we do, and we think that what we are doing is important, and we have constituents telling us that what we do is important. I can't tell you how many times this year I have had individuals from across this state who have come to hearings and who have participated in the process, and I'm thinking particularly of the zoning issues, but other issues as well, and they have said to me afterwards, they have said, I just didn't realize how hard you work. I didn't realize the amount of effort that goes into the jobs that you do. I think the public would be receptive to looking at the issue, and I think it is probably a good time to consider doing that. Senator Kristensen made an excellent case for all of the management decisions and financial decisions we make in this body that determine, help determine the welfare of our state, and I do believe that it's high time. Now, I may not