

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

May 6, 2003

LB 320

this complication. We both had some feelings about jurisdiction of our committees with regard to these bills. But in the best spirit of the body, that has all been resolved. And I thank Senator Stuhr for that, and would urge your adoption of this amendment, and your advancement of Senator Stuhr's bill. Thank you.

SPEAKER BROMM: Thank you, Senator Brashear. Senator Brashear, your light is next. Waives off. Senator Wehrbein.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Mr. President, members, I am going to support this amendment of Senator Brashear's. There are several factors going into this bill. And we've had lots of discussion, as you can imagine. The bottom line is, I want to inform the body if you don't already...because of the lack of performance in the stock market the last few years, or the last couple of years, we will be facing General Fund obligations next year when we come back to fund various retirement funds. And the judges retirement fund will be no exception. And so I bring that to your attention because I consider this amendment a better situation than we would have been without the court fee increases and so forth such as that. There are some additions in this that...in retirement benefits. But there are also some benefits to this body and to our General Fund that we will not have to fund at least this year. But it does not put off what will happen next year in terms of General Fund. And I...as a form of a deficit, we will see that fund the retirement funds. But it will also be true in other funds, potentially, if the stock market continues to be lethargic at best. And that is simply a fact of life. And I rise to support this committee...this amendment, because it puts us in a better situation with the amendment than if we did not do it. The other year...the other thing that I wanted to emphasize, it's my understanding there will be no judge increase in salaries for the judges this year or in this next biennium. They will be taking these in the form of the retirement funds, instead of taking a salary increase like all other state employees have had. So there are some trade-offs in here that I think are realistic, in terms of the political process. And I think that it behooves us to support this amendment. It gets us in a...as I said, in a better condition than we are without it. It raises