

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

May 13, 2003

LB 407

we've already had, you...the only place we can go, as far as I'm concerned, is staff. So, every one of you have at least two staff. Some have more than that. But I think if this goes...if this cut is sustained, that you can just decide that you're going to cut your staff at least in half. And I'll get the exact figures a little later on today exactly what it will be. But just figure that half of your staff is going to be gone.

SENATOR WEHRBEIN: Thank you. I'm going to go on to Supreme Court. And I think that this is a draconian cut to the Supreme Court. I know it's easy to say to cut the Supreme Court. But they...talking about the constitution, there is a constitutional responsibility for the Supreme Court. And by and large, they're entitled to the funding that they need to satisfactorily run their court system. And so we debated. We finally took \$200,000 to cut some court days open in several counties across the state. A court system has to be there by constitution. So I think this is far too draconian to the Supreme Court to have a satisfactory run. And it isn't...our cases are not declining. They're going up. And if you notice, we've added judges in the last few years. So simply to cut \$4 million...\$6 million, actually almost 7, is an enormous cut that I am fully confident cannot be cut. Once again, the Supreme Court is heavily on personnel, as you well can imagine. And I think that this is far beyond the realm. Going down to Attorney General, it's kind of interesting, we have an Attorney General that was adamant about cutting, cutting, cutting. Now that it's his office, it's found out how draconian the cuts were. I think the Attorney General's Office is forty-ninth or fiftieth out of the states in terms of funding across the United States. In fact, there's a proposal to increase the funding to this Attorney General because of some of the cuts. And by the way, that...some of that increase...and I think Senator Chambers will have that amendment...is one way to help counties in their prosecution and defense. And so a cut like this, when actually they're requesting more money about this same amount, is kind of interesting, because they are not able to fulfill their duties as they think they should, and it's putting a burden back on the counties, and...

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.