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LB 320

well?

SENATOR BEUTLER: The court fees were raised both to fund the problem that you just described, as well as to fund...

SENATOR BOURNE: An enhanced benefit.

SENATOR BEUTLER: ...the enhanced benefit.

SENATOR BOURNE: And you're getting ahead of me, but what we have here, ladies and gentlemen of the Legislature, we have an obligation to fund the underfunded portion of the judges' retirement plan. We have that obligation. So we either fund that through a General Fund appropriation or we fund it through fees that Senator Brashear has advocated for here. So again, I'm to separate this issue into two components. The first component is, is that the plan is underfunded and we the state have an obligation to fund it, so we do that through increased fees or General Fund appropriations or something of that nature. It has to be done. So then the other component of the bill, as it is before you, is an enhanced benefit. And, Senator Beutler, this is what your objection...objecting to basically. You're not objecting to our funding the unfunded or underfunded plan. Is that accurate?

SENATOR BEUTLER: That's right.

SENATOR BOURNE: Okay. But you are objecting to, and through both of your amendments this is my understanding, you're objecting to the increased benefit that the judges will receive under the bill as it now stands.

SENATOR BEUTLER: That's right.

SENATOR BOURNE: Okay. And could you help us out as to what the increased benefit is? I...

SENATOR BEUTLER: The increased benefit had two aspects. One was an early retirement aspect that would allow early retirement under better circumstances at age 62, and this is for a plan that you only have to be in ten years in order to be fully