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LR 12

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Janssen. (Visitors introduced.) On with discussion of LR 12CA. Senator Stuthman, followed by Senator Beutler and others.

SENATOR STUTHMAN: Thank you, Mr. President and members of the body. I've been listening to the discussion this morning, and I think this is something that realistically should be put out to the people. The thing that really concerns me is that, you know, what are the headlines going to be in tomorrow's paper? Is it going to say: senators want pay raise? Or is it going to realistically say that the legislative body is asking the voters, do you want to give your senator a raise? Do you want to...your elected official to be down here for X amount of dollars? The one that you want to represent you, is he only worth so many dollars for the sacrifice that has to be given? I think that is the main question. And I'd also like to echo some of the comments that Senator Chambers had stated. You know, we're not asking for a pay increase. We're letting the people. And the only way that we can do this is if we put it on the ballot. We're not saying we want \$24,000, or we want \$40,000. What do the people want us to receive, you know, for the services that we're giving them? Everyone down here, you know, knew what the salary was when they came down here. But I think we got an issue, with the term limits, that's going to realistically limit the amount of people that want to come down here and serve and have the financial resources to serve. I think we're only, if we pass this--and I'm totally in favor of passing this--what we're only trying to do is ask the voters, should the salary be increased for the people that represents them? Is it enough? It's been 18 years since it has been put to the people. So I think that is something we need to think about. Are the people that are voting on this, are they receiving the same dollars that they received 18 years ago? I'm sure gasoline prices weren't the same right now. I believe 18 years ago they were probably around 79 cents. You know, these are the issues. We're not asking one; we're doing the procedural part of it as putting it to the vote of the people, letting them tell us. If they vote it down, and that's all they want to have their representative receive that they elect, then we will live with it. And I'll return the balance of my comments...or, balance of my time to the Chair. Thank you.