

May 20, 1981

LB 111

SENATOR NICHOL: Senator Chronister, would you like to respond to that?

SENATOR CHRONISTER: Senator Newell, I appreciate all the friendliness I can find, believe me. But at the moment I don't believe... I rather try 111 in its original form.

SENATOR NICHOL: Okay, are you making a motion then, Senator Newell?

SENATOR NEWELL: Well, I just wanted to make sure that we understand that Senator Chronister isn't willing to compromise. I feel better about voting against it and I would urge my colleagues to vote against it. I will withdraw it since Senator Chronister thinks he has the votes, and we will see whether he does or not. I will withdraw the motion and then I will have a good conscience when I oppose LB 111.

SENATOR NICHOL: It is withdrawn.

CLERK: Mr. President, I have nothing further on the bill.

SENATOR CHRONISTER: Mr. President and members of the body, we are all well aware that LB 111 sets a formula for providing the salaries of judges. It is not a pay raise for the judges. Now when LB 111 was previously debated, probably the most frequently repeated argument against it was that it would reduce accountability of the state's judiciary to the Legislature. That argument is mistaken and misdirected. Actually, the Legislature has any number of means for reviewing the performance of the courts and the judges who serve in them. The Legislature writes the laws which the judges apply, including the laws which structure the courts. Through the appropriations process we wield the power of the purse strings over the judiciary. Whenever any such measure is enacted, we are reviewing the performance of the courts and holding the judges accountable to the Legislature and to the people. LB 111 will provide for greater accountability of the courts and judges to this Legislature. Remarks made on the floor might have one believe that LB 111 is something more than a bill. It's provisions are not permanent and unchangeable. If at any future session we feel that the judges of a particular court are paid too much or too little, we can simply pass a bill which amends the percentages. This bill will create accountability within the court system as well. Under LB 111 all courts must sink or swim together.