

bill.

PRESIDENT: Senator Higgins, you are recognized.

SENATOR HIGGINS: Thank you, Mr. President. I would just like to say that I support this bill. I'm supporting it from personal experience. When my mother was alive and working she worked for the county. At the time she worked for the county there was no retirement system for her. She went to work for a cemetery and they also provided no retirement system. She went to work for the church, nonprofit organization, and they also had no retirement system. So there was a woman who had worked so many years out of her life and yet, when it came time when they said you are too old to work, what was she left to live on. Nobody felt any obligation to give an employee something for years of the hours and days of their life that they put in. I recognize the fact that small businesses might not have retirement systems because many times in small businesses they come and go, their employees, or they just can't afford it. But I think when you are talking about the counties, if you did a study, you would find that most of your county employees usually stay a good number of years. I think that they should have some type of a retirement system. Therefore I would support this bill. Thank you.

PRESIDENT: Senator Goll.

SENATOR GOLL: Mr. President, I have a question for Senator Wesely. Senator Wesely, I think the question has been answered, but I want to make absolutely sure as I read this, the committee statement says the bill would give these counties remaining outside the retirement system until January 1 of '87, to join. Then the bill says, on page 4, that a county employees retirement system shall be established. Now I haven't read the rest of the statutes and really don't intend to. But are we, absolutely, mandating then to our county governments that those who are not under the program, from here on, will be and they have no...in other words, are we usurping the judgements and decisions of those county boards?

SENATOR WESELY: Well, I'm not going to answer the question you have. I will say this though, we are mandating that by January 1, 1987, as you said, counties will have to be under a retirement plan.