

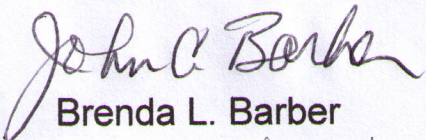
Independent Citizens Commission c/o  
State Auditor  
State Capitol  
Little Rock, AR 72201

To the members of the Commission:

My wife and I are completely opposed to raising the salaries of the Arkansas State Legislators and changing them from part time to full time. We will gain nothing but a group of full time bureaucrats. Presently we have citizens who care about their fellow citizens in all matters of taxation, laws, our natural resources, and rights as Arkansans. We don't want our state government becoming a bureaucracy whose purpose is to perpetuate itself with little regard to the citizens of this state and their wishes. Please discontinue all efforts toward a full time legislature!

Sincerely,

John C. Barber



Brenda L. Barber



275 River Trace Drive  
Marion, AR 72364  
870-739-4848

*Debra Hobbs*

FW: Independent Citizens Commission [#45]

HYPERLINK "mailto:dhobbs55@sbcglobal.net"dhobbs55@sbcglobal.net

Congratulations on your appointment to the first independent citizens commission. I imagine you will be thankf when your task is completed.

I had the honor of representing the citizens of my district from 2009-2014. I believe I was fairly compensated fc my service. The salaries you are recommending, however, are unfair to the taxpayers of Arkansas.

When you vote on the salaries, please consider the following:

Arkansas has a part time legislature and it needs to remain a part time one so that we can continue to have the many sectors of the public represented.

Your proposed increase would pay part-time legislators more than the state beginning mimimum salary for public school teachers.

On average, full time state employees who have worked nine years are paid \$35,400. The governor's budget c for a 1% increase for them. In the past, increases have been supported by legislators, only to have them eliminated due to RSA. It is possible, this could occur once again.

Amendment 94 requires the commission to consider the overall economic condition of the state. The current proposed budget spends \$217 million surplus funds, yet does not account for any increase for elected officials. In addition, an amended capital gains tax exemption will require approximately \$10 million, again, not allowed i in the budget.

Amendment 94 states the commission may increase, but not decrease salaries. I implore you to postpone increases until 2017 when overall salaries can be factored into a new budget.

My knowledge is limited on the comments you have received. I do know, however, that most of the citizens are appalled at the size of the increase you are considering. The public generally distrusts elected officials. The raises you are suggesting would simply add to the cynicism, even though salary adjustments are no longer unc their purview; a fact of which many are unaware.

In closing, if you feel you must raise elected officials salary, please make the adjustments at the same rate of other state employees.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Debra M. Hobbs



*Scott Minton*

public hearing about recommended pay raises

Dear Sirs:Madam

Thanks for allowing me to comment this morning about the recommended pay raises. I always rehash what I say in meetings like this and would like to take one more opportunity to make my position clear.

By a ratio of about 25 or 30 to 1, the people I talk with oppose a number of the %'s recommended. The only person I talked to who was even neutral on this was a legislator who E-mailed me to say he was just elected and had no input, and would have no real input for years because he was new and had no power. The general public even though they aren't nearly vocal enough, are opposed to the amounts and will say so if questioned.

Additionally, I was shocked that Mr. Banks stated that he felt no more consideration should be given: seems like he was saying the law would prevent another vote etc. Makes me wonder why we even had the public hearing your minds were already made up.

As per the comments by the man who followed me and supported the recommendations, I suspect he was a lawyer working likely for the state; but, I stand corrected if he is employed in the private sector. As for the 2 women judges or whatever they were, you are a lot smarter than I if you have any idea what they were for or against!!

Good luck in your deliberations, if you are allowed to deliberate after hearing Mr. Banks quotes about the law.

Scott Minton

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Scott Minton

Mr. John M. Belew  
Attorney at Law  
Fayetteville, AR  
jmbelew@yahoo.com

Independent Citizens Commission  
c/o Office of the Auditor of the State of Arkansas  
State Capitol  
Little Rock, AR, 72201  
info@citizenscommission.ar.gov

Members of the Commission:

The service of each member on the Independent Citizens Commission is much appreciated by me, my friends and associates. I write separately to address our one major concern of your recommendation: the salaries of the justices of the Arkansas Supreme Court, our highest state court.

For almost forty years, I have practiced law in this state. I have served as a special justice on the Arkansas Supreme Court. Without hesitation, I recommend that the salaries of the justices should be increased to no less than \$180,000. Each week, the members of that court shoulder heavy burdens and work tirelessly for the citizens of this state in order to hand down more than 600 per curiams and opinions each year. Each week, they must read volumes of briefs and records, as well as research and address issues involving every body of law. They consider the impact of decisions from our lowest tier, the district court, to our highest authority, the United States Supreme Court. They are required to write and publish their opinions. Once published, their work is carefully analyzed by the 8000 attorneys of this state. It takes discipline and dedication to master the various intricacies of the many bodies of law, and to deliver knowledgeable opinions, each justice must retain a vast storehouse of law.

It is essential to the freedom and privileges of our citizens that we elect justices whose character and intellect enable them to accomplish their assigned tasks. In visiting with justices from other states, I have learned that the workload of the Arkansas Supreme Court is greater than the workload of any of our sister state high court. The quality of our

court's work is second to none. Should we wish to maintain our superior position, the justices must be properly compensated.

I recognize that all justices are not equal. Each justice brings to the conference table their unique experiences and knowledge of the law. Nevertheless, the selection of judges is a matter for the ballot process, which has worked well in the past and present, and if left unimpeded should serve us well in the future. This confidence in the electorate supports my recommendation that the Commission increase the salaries of our justices to at least that of the justices on the Tennessee Supreme Court.

Your consideration is appreciated.

Sincerely,

John M. Belew