

SCOMM

#49:45

## A Lawmaker's Bills

### Senator's High Salary Can Prove Very Low, Vermont's Leahy Finds

His \$57,500 a Year Is Drained  
By Expense of 2 Homes,  
Travel, Big Withholding  
But Will Voters Understand?

By JAMES P. GANNON

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WASHINGTON — Patrick and Marcelle Leahy would like you to know how it is to just scrape by on \$57,500 a year.

It may sound absurd that a family with such a grand income could be budgeting carefully to make ends meet, but that's the way it is with the Leahys. In fact, they have been growing poorer in the two years since Mr. Leahy took his new job in Washington — as a U.S. Senator from Vermont. You'd think, then, that the 37-year-old Democrat would be overjoyed at the \$12,900-a-year salary increase he has just received, but the fact is he tried to kill his pay boost.

If all this sounds a bit unreal, it's just that some of Washington's realities are rather odd. Members of Congress and their families don't live like ordinary people. They try to lead two lives, as participants in the high-cost of life of the nation's capital and as political figures and just-folks back in their home states. The result is an expensive, mobile life style, in which a salary considered excessive by many of their constituents just melts away.

The recent controversy over this year's fat congressional pay raise, and passage of an ethics code limiting outside earnings, have prompted many questions about our lawmakers' finances. Why do they need such big salaries? Why do so many members of Congress contend they need outside income, too? How do they spend their money? And where do all the funds appropriated for the "billion-dollar Congress" go?

To help provide some answers, Sen. Leahy agreed to let a reporter probe his personal finances as well as the allowances he gets for official use. The result isn't likely to trigger sympathetic tears from the average American family, which earns about \$13,500 a year, but it does shed some light on the economics of serving in Congress and the politics of living off the public payroll.



What emerges is a picture of a comfortable way of life, but one with its own special pressures as well as special benefits. It is a life of free parking, paid travel, generous staff help and free medical care — balanced against leftover campaign debts, two sets of household bills, high taxes and a parade of constituents expecting to be entertained.

"I'm not complaining," Sen. Leahy declares. The youthful Democrat is delighted at his leap from prosecuting attorney in Burlington, Vt., to the venerable George Aiken's seat in the U.S. Senate. He had yearned for the job since boyhood, he claims. "If they cut the salary to \$1 a year, I'd still want to be in the Senate," he remarks.

#### Typical to a Point

Mr. Leahy can't be called a "typical" member of Congress, because there isn't any such common denominator in a diverse body of 535 people who include millionaires, former blue-collar workers, priests, part-time farmers and lifelong politicians. But he is representative of the many lawmakers who primarily live off their congressional salaries rather than outside income or inherited wealth.

The Senate is sometimes called a rich man's club, and the House, too, has a sizable share of wealthy members, though in much smaller portion. Perhaps a third or more of the 100 Senators are millionaires, according to educated guesses on Capitol Hill. (Financial disclosure mandated by the just-passed ethics code won't take effect until next year.) To cite one example, Pennsylvania's Sen. John Heinz, the pickle-and-ketchup adman, draws a \$400,000-plus annual income from some \$13 million in family trust funds and lives in a \$437,000 Georgetown home. He's unique only in voluntarily disclosing financial facts that most rich lawmakers have kept secret.

Mr. Leahy, the son of a Vermont printer, isn't wealthy. In fact, his net worth has declined during his two years in the Senate to \$45,132 from nearly \$100,000. The decline, the Senator says, reflects the costs of renovating their Vermont home, "enormous" expenses of moving, un reimbursed Senate expenses and other heavy transition costs that hit a man moving from private life into politics.

#### Seeing Double

Mr. Leahy and his wife Marcelle, an ex-nurse, have three children (aged 13, 11 and 7), two cars, two houses and two versions of every bill the average homeowner pays. "Everything for us is doubled," comments Mrs. Leahy, who handles the bill-paying. "Two mortgages, two electric bills, two telephone bills. I look at his salary and I think, 'My God, we've got it made' but then you sit down and start paying double everything and it's a juggling act," she says.

Their Washington-area home is a handsome, brick three-bedroom town house, with the Vermont state flag flying in front and a tiny yard in back, in a suburban development in McLean, Va. It cost them \$83,000, and brought them a \$70,000 mortgage. "For this amount in Burlington, I'd have a luxury home," the Senator laments.

Their Vermont home, which they use in summertime and on trips back home, is a 130-year-old farmhouse on more than 100 acres of land near Middlesex. After moving to Washington, the Leahys sold what had been their permanent home in Burlington (for about \$54,000) and spent about \$20,000 to modernize and winterize the farmhouse.

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# A Lawmaker's Bills: A Senator's High Pay Can Prove To Be Amazingly Low, Leahy of Vermont Discovers

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which had served only as a vacation retreat. Though some lawmakers have just a small apartment or nominal residence back home, the Leahys think it's important to keep a family home in Vermont to retain their sense of roots. "We want the kids to remember that they belong to Vermont," Marcelle says. "We don't want them to become Washingtonians."

Maintaining two homes is the main drain on Mr. Leahy's salary. Mortgage payments run \$427 a month on their Virginia house and \$369 a month on the Vermont farm. Property taxes are about \$1,400 a year in Virginia and \$2,000 a year in Vermont. Fuel and electric bills total about \$150 a month in Virginia ("we wore our ski parkas in the house in January to save fuel," the Senator says) and about \$550 for the full year on the farm. Insurance, repairs and other household bills likewise come in double doses.

The Leahy kids go to public schools in part because the budget won't permit costly private schooling. The Senator drives himself to work in his 1977 Dodge Aspen (payments \$205 a month), leaving the house a little after 6 a.m. to beat the rush-hour traffic to Washington, and normally returning between 7 p.m. and 8 p.m. He finds his early-morning hours in the office a good time to call Vermont farmers, who rise early too, and to read every piece of mail from his constituents, who send him more than 100 letters a day.

"He calls me about 7:30 each day to say good morning," Marcelle reports.

## Hefty Deductions

That \$57,500-a-year annual salary doesn't look quite so princely when it's reduced to a once-a-month paycheck with hefty deductions. The gross monthly earnings of \$4,791.66 shrink to a net take-home check of \$2,673.01 after deductions of \$2,118.65. More than one-third of the Senator's pay goes for withholding taxes—\$1,243 for the federal income tax and \$351 for the state—and another \$383 a month is deducted for his government pension plan. Under the plan, he'd get an annual pension of \$4,625 at age 62 if he served only one six-year term, and at least \$46,000 a year if he spent the next 30 years in Congress.

The Senate salary is almost the entire family income for the Leahys. They own no stocks, bonds or income properties, and earn only a couple of hundred dollars a year in interest on their savings of about \$7,000. Marcelle doesn't have a paying job; she feels she's needed at home by her young children.

The Senator last year earned about \$1,900 in "honoraria"—fees for giving speeches—far less than the \$25,000 or so that the Senate's big-name speechmakers talk themselves into each year.

The new congressional ethics code, which includes an \$4,625 annual limit on outside earned income, won't really affect Mr. Leahy's finances. The Senate's big speechmakers are unhappy about the limit, and the Senate's rich men are glad that it won't apply to dividends, interest, business profits and other "unearned" income, but Sen. Leahy isn't in either group. The earnings limit won't take effect until 1979, anyway.

Fighting a Pay Raise see next page

with Vermont's fiscally conservative voters. "Partly, it's pressure from home," admits a Leahy staff aide. "There is a feeling at home that congressional staffs are bloated." Of the \$589,341 available for staff expense this year, Mr. Leahy is budgeting to return about \$144,000 unspent, the same amount he turned back last year.

His staff consists of 16 aides in Washington and seven in his home-state office in Burlington. Salaries range from \$37,241 for his top Washington aide down to \$4,102 for a clerk.

Like all Senators, Mr. Leahy gets lots of fringe benefits. He's entitled to two free parking spaces in the Senate's underground garage, and special auto license tags that keep police from ticketing his car if it's parked illegally.

## Free Medical Care

If he needs a prescription drug, an X-ray, a physical checkup or treatment for a routine ailment, he can get free medical care at a clinic in the Capitol staffed by three full-time physicians. (The free care is for members of Congress only, not their families, and doesn't cover hospital bills.) If he wants potted plants for his office, the government's Botanic Garden will provide them without charge, and if he'd like some wall maps, the U.S. Geological Survey will send them over, for free. But the free haircut, an old congressional tradition, has just disappeared: starting April 1, the Senate barbershop began charging \$3.50 to trim Senators' hair.

In addition to his personal and official expenses, Sen. Leahy has a third set of finances to keep track of—his political fund. He ended his \$150,000 Senate campaign in 1974 with a \$40,000 campaign debt and has slowly been raising money to pay it off. At the start of 1977, his campaign committee still owed \$5,819. Contributions from unions, environmental groups and many individuals are helping wipe out the debt. Sen. Leahy plans a fund-raising function this month in Burlington, Vt., starring his friend Edward Kennedy of Massachusetts, and hopes to wind up 1977 out of the red.

Though Sen. Leahy and his wife talk freely of their financial situation, they wonder if the average person can see it as they do. Says Mrs. Leahy: "It's really difficult to understand what is going on here with us, and to relate it to life back home." The Senator adds: "I suspect some people back home will think I'm crying poor-mouth but I'm not. I can't think of anything I'd rather be doing."

### Fighting a Pay Raise

Though his former \$44,000-a-year Senate salary was heavily eaten up by living expenses, Mr. Leahy didn't feel comfortable with the \$12,900 pay increase proposed this year for members of Congress. His mail ran strongly against it, and he knew that he soon would be voting for legislation demanding sacrifices from the voters, such as energy-tax increases. So he took a stand against the salary boost.

In February, Sen. Leahy joined 41 other Senators in voting to bring to the floor a motion to kill the pay increase, but the anti-pay raise move lost, 56 to 42. The House never voted on the pay boost, which automatically became effective in March.

Sen. Leahy doesn't believe the extra \$12,900 will make much difference to him. Almost \$4,000 of it will go to higher federal and state income-tax withholding, he notes, and the rest will go to pay out-of-pocket expenses that everyone assumes are reimbursable but aren't, he figures.

That comment reflects one of the oddities of the "billion-dollar Congress," so-called because this fiscal year's legislative-branch budget tops \$1 billion, up sharply from \$467 million five years ago. Although congressional staffs have grown, salaries have risen and expense allowances have increased, many lawmakers have found they must dig into their own pockets—or into privately donated funds—to supplement their official expense accounts.

### Quirks in the Rules

Sen. Leahy figures that he had roughly \$10,000 worth of unreimbursed expenses last year, including travel, entertainment and other items. By the quirks of Senate travel allowance rules, for example, transportation costs to and within his state are covered but food and hotel bills are not. A Senator may put newspapers and magazine subscriptions on his tab, but not books, reports or directories.

Vermont constituents visiting Washington often have lunch in the Senate dining room with Mr. Leahy, figuring it's on the house; but there's no such thing as a free lunch in Congress, and Sen. Leahy says such get-togethers cost him \$1,500 to \$2,000 last year. When he flies to Vermont for a weekend, local folks often complain that he should have brought his wife and children, he says. "I tell them that it would cost me \$380," he adds, "and then they ask, 'Do you mean you don't come up in a government airplane?'"

Sen. Leahy is allowed 40 paid trips back to Vermont per year. He actually has made about 100 trips in two years, bringing his wife along at his expense about 15 times.

The Senator's total expense allowance, intended to cover travel, stationery, postage, telephone costs, subscriptions, expenses of a Vermont office and other items amounts to \$36,094. But he spends much more than that and makes up the difference himself. Unlike many Senators, Sen. Leahy doesn't have an "unofficial" office account, supported by private contributors, to help cover expenses; such "slush funds" have been abolished, effective next year, under the new ethics code.

### Skimping on Staff

While overspending his expense account, he's underspending his staff allowance. Senators' staff allowances, based on state population, run from \$449,063 for small states like Vermont up to \$998,301 for the most populous state, California. In addition to the \$449,063, Mr. Leahy gets a separate committee staff allowance of \$139,278 to hire aides to help with his committee work on the Agriculture and Appropriations panels.

But Sen. Leahy deliberately underspends on his staff so he can turn money back in each year—a move undeniably popular

USA  
Today  
8/6/85

## State lawmakers gather in Seattle

Thousands of state legislators are in Seattle today through Friday for the 11th annual National Conference of State Legislatures. Topics: health care, education, technology. Salaries and allotments for living expenses during legislative sessions:

| State          | Salary          | Living expenses |
|----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| Alabama        | \$10 a day      | \$85 a day      |
| Alaska         | \$46,800 a year | none            |
| Arizona        | \$15,000 a year | \$60 a day*     |
| Arkansas       | \$7,500 a year  | \$44-\$64 a day |
| California     | \$33,732 a year | \$66 a day      |
| Colorado       | \$17,500 a year | \$75 a day      |
| Connecticut    | \$13,000 a year | \$75 a day      |
| Delaware       | \$12,198 a year | \$2,600 a year  |
| Florida        | \$12,000 a year | \$50 a day      |
| Georgia        | \$7,200 a year  | \$59 a day      |
| Hawaii         | \$15,600 a year | \$45 a day      |
| Idaho          | \$30 a day      | \$35-\$60 a day |
| Illinois       | \$28,000 a year | \$69 a day      |
| Indiana        | \$11,800 a year | \$65 a day      |
| Iowa           | \$14,600 a year | \$25-\$45 a day |
| Kansas         | \$49 a day      | \$60 a day      |
| Kentucky       | \$100 a day     | \$75 a day*     |
| Louisiana      | \$16,800 a year | \$75 a day      |
| Maine          | \$7,500 a year  | \$50 a day      |
| Maryland       | \$21,000 a year | \$72 a day      |
| Massachusetts  | \$30,000 a year | none            |
| Michigan       | \$34,860 a year | \$6,700 a year  |
| Minnesota      | \$21,140 a year | \$32-\$36 a day |
| Mississippi    | \$8,100 a year  | \$44 a day*     |
| Missouri       | \$8,078 a year  | \$35 a day*     |
| Montana        | \$50 a day      | \$45 a day      |
| Nebraska       | \$4,800 a year  | \$25-\$55 a day |
| Nevada         | \$6,240 a year  | \$56 a day      |
| New Hampshire  | \$100 a year    | none            |
| New Jersey     | \$25,000 a year | none            |
| New Mexico     | \$75 a day      | none            |
| New York       | \$43,000 a year | \$55 a day      |
| North Carolina | \$8,400 a year  | \$60 a day      |
| North Dakota   | \$40-\$90 a day | \$50 a day*     |
| Ohio           | \$22,500 a year | none            |
| Oklahoma       | \$20,000 a year | \$35 a day*     |
| Oregon         | \$8,400 a year  | \$44 a day      |
| Pennsylvania   | \$35,000 a year | \$75 a day      |
| Rhode Island   | \$5 a day       | none            |
| South Carolina | \$10,000 a year | \$68 a day      |
| South Dakota   | \$3,200 a year  | \$75 a day*     |
| Tennessee      | \$12,500 a year | \$71 a day      |
| Texas          | \$7,200 a year  | \$30 a day      |
| Utah           | \$65 a day      | \$25 a day      |
| Vermont        | \$11,000 a year | \$60 a day      |
| Virginia       | \$11,000 a year | \$65 a day      |
| Washington     | \$13,750 a year | \$44 a day      |
| West Virginia  | \$6,500 a year  | \$20-\$70 a day |
| Wisconsin      | \$27,222 a year | \$20-\$42 a day |
| Wyoming        | \$75 a day      | \$80 a day      |

\* \$35 a day for Maricopa County legislators — both are new allotments effective Wednesday

\* per actual day of attendance

\* for Jackson legislators, daily attendance only

\* for daily attendance only

\* for legislators outside Capitol

\* five-day week

Source: National Conference of State Legislators 1985 survey

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**RESEARCH MONOGRAPH**

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**LEGISLATIVE SALARIES**



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**82:146**

## LEGISLATIVE SALARIES

82:146

Legislative Research was asked to provide information on legislative salaries in other states. This monograph compares biennial salaries and expense allowances in each state and how salaries and allowances are set. The use of special compensation commissions is also discussed.

### Salaries and Allowances

In 38 states legislators are paid a specific amount, regardless of the length of session. Data compiled by the National Conference of State Legislatures (NCSL) indicate that biennial salaries in these states range from \$200 in New Hampshire to \$65,920 in New York. The average is \$29,051.

In the remaining 12 states legislators are paid a salary based on the number of days or weeks the legislature is in session. Daily rates range from \$5 in North Dakota and Rhode Island to \$104 in Nevada.

**Salaries in full-time legislatures.** Biennial salaries in states with full-time legislatures are considerably higher than those in other states. The Council of State Governments considers eight states to be full time. The average salary in these states is \$53,926, whereas the average in the other 31 states with a specified salary is \$22,418.

**Expenses.** In 40 states legislators receive an expense allowance while attending legislative sessions or attending to legislative business. Daily expense allowances range from \$15 in Utah to \$85 in North Dakota. The average is \$50. Legislators in

Connecticut and Michigan receive an annual expense allowance of \$2,500 and \$6,200 respectively.

Table I shows how legislators are compensated in each state.

TABLE I

Legislative Compensation  
in the 50 States

| <u>State</u>  | <u>Biennial<br/>Salary</u> | <u>Daily Salary<br/>(Session limit)</u> | <u>Daily<br/>Expense<br/>Allowance</u> |
|---------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| Alabama       | \$ ---                     | \$ 10 (210 days)                        | \$ 65                                  |
| Alaska        | 12 40,152                  | ---                                     | 80*                                    |
| Arizona       | 30,000                     | ---                                     | 40*                                    |
| Arkansas      | 15,600                     | ---                                     | 44                                     |
| California    | 4 56,222                   | ---                                     | 62                                     |
| Colorado      | 28,000                     | ---                                     | 40*                                    |
| Connecticut   | 21,000                     | ---                                     | 2,500 (annual)                         |
| Delaware      | 24,396                     | ---                                     | none                                   |
| Florida       | 24,000                     | ---                                     | 50                                     |
| Georgia       | 14,440                     | ---                                     | 44                                     |
| Hawaii        | 27,300                     | ---                                     | 45*                                    |
| Idaho         | ---                        | 30 (no limit)                           | 60*                                    |
| Illinois      | 5 56,000                   | ---                                     | 36                                     |
| Indiana       | 19,200                     | ---                                     | 50                                     |
| Iowa          | 27,400                     | ---                                     | 30                                     |
| Kansas        | ---                        | 45 (no limit)**                         | 50                                     |
| Kentucky      | ---                        | 50 (60 days)***                         | 75                                     |
| Louisiana     | 13 33,600                  | ---                                     | 75 plus mileage                        |
| Maine         | 10,000                     | ---                                     | 45*                                    |
| Maryland      | 9 42,000                   | ---                                     | 65                                     |
| Massachusetts | 3 60,000                   | ---                                     | mileage only                           |
| Michigan      | 2 62,000                   | ---                                     | 6,200 (annual)                         |
| Minnesota     | 12 37,500                  | ---                                     | 36*                                    |
| Mississippi   | 16,200                     | ---                                     | 44                                     |
| Missouri      | 30,000                     | ---                                     | 35                                     |
| Montana       | ---                        | 48.42 (90 days)                         | 45                                     |
| Nebraska      | 9,600                      | ---                                     | none                                   |
| Nevada        | ---                        | 104 (60 days)****                       | 44                                     |
| New Hampshire | 200                        | ---                                     | mileage only                           |
| New Jersey    | 36,000                     | ---                                     | none                                   |

TABLE 1--continued  
Legislative Compensation  
in the 50 States

| <u>State</u>   | <u>Biennial<br/>Salary</u> | <u>Daily Salary<br/>(Session limit)</u> | <u>Daily<br/>Expense<br/>Allowance</u> |
|----------------|----------------------------|-----------------------------------------|----------------------------------------|
| New Mexico     | \$ ---                     | \$40 (90 days)                          | none                                   |
| New York       | / 65,920                   | ---                                     | \$55                                   |
| North Carolina | 13,872                     | ---                                     | 50                                     |
| North Dakota   | ---                        | 5 (80 days)                             | 85                                     |
| Ohio           | 4 45,000                   | ---                                     | mileage only                           |
| Oklahoma       | // 40,000                  | ---                                     | 35*                                    |
| Oregon         | 15,792                     | ---                                     | 44                                     |
| Pennsylvania   | 6 50,000                   | ---                                     | 69                                     |
| Rhode Island   | ---                        | 5 (120 days)                            | mileage only                           |
| South Carolina | 20,000                     | ---                                     | 50                                     |
| South Dakota   | 6,000                      | ---                                     | 50                                     |
| Tennessee      | 16,606                     | ---                                     | 66.47                                  |
| Texas          | 14,400                     | ---                                     | 30                                     |
| Utah           | ---                        | 25 (80 days)                            | 15                                     |
| Vermont        | ---                        | 270 (weekly)                            | 50*                                    |
| Virginia       | 16,000                     | ---                                     | 58 - 75                                |
| Washington     | 24,000****                 | ---                                     | 44                                     |
| West Virginia  | 10,272                     | ---                                     | 50*                                    |
| Wisconsin      | 7 45,264                   | ---                                     | 30*                                    |
| Wyoming        | ---                        | 30 (60 days)                            | 60                                     |

SOURCE: National Conference of State Legislatures, January 1983 survey; Council of State Governments, The Book of the States, 1982-83, pp. 192-193 and 210-211.

\* Less for legislators from the capitol city or its environs.

\*\* 90-day limit in even-numbered years.

\*\*\* Increases to \$100 in 1984.

\*\*\*\* For senators elected in 1980 and after, salary is \$80 per day in Nevada and \$19,600 in Washington.

## Method of Setting Salaries

Table II shows the method of setting compensation in each state. In ~~some~~ states salaries are set by the constitution. In 22 states, including Oregon, setting salaries is solely the responsibility of the legislature. In ~~29~~<sup>21</sup> states a compensation commission advises the legislature on salary matters.

TABLE II  
Method of Setting  
Legislative Compensation

| <u>State</u>  | <u>Constitution</u> | <u>Legislature</u> | <u>Legislature<br/>and Compensation<br/>Commission</u> |
|---------------|---------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| Alabama       | X                   |                    |                                                        |
| Alaska        |                     | X                  |                                                        |
| Arizona       |                     |                    | X                                                      |
| Arkansas      | X                   |                    |                                                        |
| California    |                     | X                  |                                                        |
| Colorado      |                     |                    | X                                                      |
| Connecticut   |                     |                    | X                                                      |
| Delaware      |                     | <del>X</del>       | X                                                      |
| Florida       |                     |                    | X                                                      |
| Georgia       |                     |                    | X                                                      |
| Hawaii        |                     |                    | X                                                      |
| Idaho         |                     |                    | X                                                      |
| Illinois      |                     |                    | X                                                      |
| Indiana       |                     | X                  |                                                        |
| Iowa          |                     |                    | X                                                      |
| Kansas        |                     | X                  |                                                        |
| Kentucky      |                     |                    | X                                                      |
| Louisiana     |                     |                    | X                                                      |
| Maine         |                     | X                  |                                                        |
| Maryland      |                     |                    | X                                                      |
| Massachusetts |                     |                    | X                                                      |
| Michigan      |                     |                    | X                                                      |
| Minnesota     |                     | X                  |                                                        |
| Mississippi   |                     | X                  |                                                        |
| Missouri      |                     | X                  |                                                        |

TABLE II--continued

Method of Setting  
Legislative Compensation

| <u>State</u>   | <u>Constitution</u> | <u>Legislature</u> | <u>Legislature<br/>and Compensation<br/>Commission</u> |
|----------------|---------------------|--------------------|--------------------------------------------------------|
| Montana        |                     |                    | X                                                      |
| Nebraska       | X                   |                    |                                                        |
| Nevada         |                     | X                  |                                                        |
| New Hampshire  | X                   |                    |                                                        |
| New Jersey     |                     | X                  |                                                        |
| New Mexico     | X                   |                    |                                                        |
| New York       |                     | X                  |                                                        |
| North Carolina |                     | X                  |                                                        |
| North Dakota   | X                   |                    |                                                        |
| Ohio           |                     | X                  |                                                        |
| Oklahoma       |                     |                    | X                                                      |
| Oregon         |                     | X                  |                                                        |
| Pennsylvania   |                     | X                  |                                                        |
| Rhode Island   | X                   |                    |                                                        |
| South Carolina |                     | X                  |                                                        |
| South Dakota   |                     |                    | X                                                      |
| Tennessee      |                     | X                  |                                                        |
| Texas          | X                   |                    |                                                        |
| Utah           | <del>X</del>        |                    | X                                                      |
| Vermont        |                     | X                  |                                                        |
| Virginia       |                     | X                  |                                                        |
| Washington     |                     |                    | X                                                      |
| West Virginia  |                     |                    | X                                                      |
| Wisconsin      |                     | X                  |                                                        |
| Wyoming        |                     | X                  |                                                        |

SOURCE: The Book of the States, 1982-83, p. 201; and Legislative Research review of state statutes.

Change: NCSL

### Compensation Commissions

In 19 states boards, committees, or commissions make recommendations regarding legislative compensation. Several also recommend salaries for certain elected officials and judges. Commissions in 12 states act only in an advisory capacity. They make recommendations to the governor or the legislature, but the legislature has final authority to set salaries, expense allowances, and benefits for its members.

In Hawaii, Idaho, Maryland, and Michigan compensation commissions recommendations become effective unless the legislature enacts a resolution to the contrary. Existing salary levels are continued if the legislature rejects the commission's recommendations. In West Virginia the commission's recommendations must be enacted into law to become effective. The legislature may reduce, but not increase the proposed salary levels. Recommendations made by Oklahoma's commission are final and are not subject to legislative review. In Arizona the commission's recommendations for changes in legislative salaries are submitted to the voters for approval. In many states new salaries do not become effective until the following session of the legislature.

In some states commission members are appointed exclusively by the governor, but in others the appointing authority is shared by the governor and legislative leadership. In Washington persons holding certain positions are automatically appointed to the commission.

Table III summarizes the major organizational and functional aspects of each state commission, including the number of commission members, appointing authority, and scope and frequency of commission recommendations.

TABLE III

## STATE COMPENSATION COMMISSIONS

| <u>Name of Commission</u>                                  | <u>Number of Members</u> | <u>Appointing Authority</u>                                                                                                                | <u>Scope of Recommendations</u>                                                                                                                                             | <u>Frequency of Recommendations</u> |
|------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Arizona Commission on Salaries for State Elective Officers | 5                        | 2 by Governor, 1 by Senate President, 1 by House Speaker, and 1 by Chief Justice of Supreme Court                                          | Salaries of legislators and elected state officials (Changes in legislative salaries must be approved by the voters.)                                                       | At direction of legislature         |
| Colorado State Officials' Compensation Commission          | 9                        | 3 by Governor, 2 by Senate President, 2 by House Speaker, and 2 by Chief Justice of Supreme Court                                          | Salaries, allowances, and benefits of legislators, state judges, district attorneys, and elected and appointed officials (advisory only)                                    | Biennially                          |
| Connecticut Compensation Commission                        | 11                       | 3 by Governor, 2 by House Speaker, 2 by House Minority Leader, 2 by Senate President Pro Tempore, and 2 by Senate Minority Leader          | Salary, expenses, and benefits of legislators, elected officials, and judges (advisory only)                                                                                | Biennially                          |
| Florida Officers' Compensation Commission                  | 9                        | 2 by Governor, 2 by Senate President, 2 by House Speaker, and 2 by Chief Justice of Supreme Court. The 8 members appoint the ninth member. | Salary and expenses of legislators, specified state officials, judges, state attorneys, public defenders, public service commissioners, and county officers (advisory only) | Annually                            |
| Georgia Commission on Compensation                         | 12                       | 4 by Governor, 4 by Supreme Court, 2 by Senate President (Lieutenant Governor), and 2 by House Speaker                                     | Compensation of legislators, state officers, and heads of state agencies (Legislature required to introduce commission recommendation as a bill)                            | Biennially                          |
| Hawaii Commission on Legislative Salary                    | 11                       | Governor                                                                                                                                   | Salary of legislators (Recommendations effective unless rejected by Legislature or Governor. If rejected, existing rates are continued)                                     | Every 8 years                       |
| Idaho Legislative Compensation Commission                  | 6                        | 3 by Governor and 3 by Supreme Court                                                                                                       | Salary and expenses of legislators (Legislature may reject or reduce recommended rates. If rejected, existing rates are continued.)                                         | Biennially                          |

**TABLE III--continued**  
**STATE COMPENSATION COMMISSIONS**

| <u>Name of Commission</u>                                        | <u>Number of Members</u> | <u>Appointing Authority</u>                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           | <u>Scope of Recommendations</u>                                                                 | <u>Frequency of Recommendations</u> |
|------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Montana Salary Commission                                        | 6                        | 2 by Governor, 2 by Supreme Court, 1 by Senate Majority Leader, 1 by Senate Minority Leader, 1 by House Speaker, and 1 by House Minority Leader                                                                                                                                       | Compensation of legislators, elected officials, and judges (advisory only)                      | Biennially                          |
| Oklahoma Board on Legislative Compensation                       | 11                       | 5 by Governor, 2 by the Senate President Pro Tempore, and 2 by House Speaker (Chairman of Tax Commission and Director of State Finance are non-voting ex-officio members.)                                                                                                            | Salary of legislators (Board recommendations are final)                                         | Biennially                          |
| South Dakota Commission on Salaries for Elective State Officials | 5                        | 2 by Governor, 1 by Senate President Pro Tempore, 1 by House Speaker, and 1 by Chief Justice of Supreme Court                                                                                                                                                                         | Salaries of legislators, elected officials, and judges (advisory only)                          | Biennially                          |
| Washington Committee on Salaries                                 | 7                        | President of University of Puget Sound, President of Washington State University, Chairman of State Personnel Board, President of Association of Washington Business, President of Pacific Northwest Personnel Managers' Association, and President of Washington State Labor Council | Salaries of legislators, state elective and executive officials, and judges (advisory only)     | Biennially                          |
| West Virginia Citizens Legislative Compensation Commission       | 7                        | Governor                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                              | Compensation and expenses of legislators (Legislature may accept or decrease recommended rates) | Quadrennially                       |

**SOURCE:** Legislative Research review of state statutes

TABLE III--continued  
STATE COMPENSATION COMMISSIONS

| <u>Name of Commission</u>                                                                       | <u>Number of Members</u> | <u>Appointing Authority</u>                                                                                                                                                                                                                     | <u>Scope of Recommendations</u>                                                                                                                                                                                          | <u>Frequency of Recommendations</u> |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Illinois Advisory Committee on Compensation of General Assembly Members                         | 7                        | 3 by Governor, 2 by President of Senate, and 2 by House Speaker                                                                                                                                                                                 | Compensation of legislators (advisory only)                                                                                                                                                                              | Biennially                          |
| Iowa Commission on Compensation, Expenses and Salaries for Elected State Officials              | 15                       | 5 by Governor, 5 by Senate President (Lieutenant Governor), and 5 by House Speaker                                                                                                                                                              | Salary, compensation, and expenses of legislators, elected state officials, and judges (advisory only)                                                                                                                   | Biennially                          |
| Kentucky Public Officials Compensation Commission                                               | 5                        | 1 by Governor, 1 by Lieutenant Governor, 1 by House Speaker, 1 by Senate President Pro Tempore, and 1 by Supreme Court                                                                                                                          | Salaries, benefits, and allowances of legislators and certain elected officials and judges (advisory only)                                                                                                               | Biennially                          |
| Louisiana Compensation Review Commission                                                        | 19                       | 5 appointed by Governor, 1 by Chief Justice of Supreme Court, 1 by Chairman of Conferences of Courts of Appeal Judges, 1 by District Judges' Association, and 1 by City Judges' Association (5 Senators and 5 Representatives are also members) | Salary and benefits of legislators, elected officials, judges, and unclassified state employees (advisory only)                                                                                                          | Annually                            |
| Maryland General Assembly Compensation Commission                                               | 9                        | 5 by Governor, 2 by Senate Senate President, and 2 by House Speaker                                                                                                                                                                             | Salary and allowances of legislators (Legislature may reject or reduce recommended rates. If rejected, existing rates are continued.)                                                                                    | Quadrennially                       |
| Massachusetts Advisory Board on Legislative, Judicial and Constitutional Officers' Compensation | 5                        | Governor                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Salaries and expenses of legislators, constitutional officers, and judges (advisory only)                                                                                                                                | Biennially                          |
| Michigan State Officers' Compensation Commission                                                | 7                        | Governor                                                                                                                                                                                                                                        | Salaries and expenses of legislators, Governor and Lieutenant Governor, and Justices of Supreme Court (Recommendations effective unless rejected by 2/3 vote of legislature. If rejected, existing rates are continued.) | Biennially                          |

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 303/292-6600

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Legislative Compensation  
 and  
 Living Expenses During Session

| STATE | * SALARIES                                          | * LIVING EXPENSES DURING SESSION                                   |
|-------|-----------------------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------|
| AL    | \$10.00/day                                         | \$85 per diem (unvouchered)                                        |
| AK    | 46,800/year                                         | None                                                               |
| AZ    | 15,000/year                                         | \$40 per diem (\$20 for Maricopa County legislators) (unvouchered) |
| AR    | 7,500/year                                          | \$44 per diem (7 day week)<br>\$20 (actual attendance) (vouchered) |
| CA    | 33,732/year                                         | \$66 per diem (unvouchered)                                        |
| CO    | 17,500/year                                         | \$75 per diem (unvouchered)                                        |
| CT    | 13,000/year                                         | \$3,500 annually (unvouchered)                                     |
| DE    | 12,198/year                                         | \$2,500/year (unvouchered)                                         |
| FL    | 12,000/year                                         | \$50 per diem (unvouchered)                                        |
| GA    | 7,200/year                                          | \$59 per diem (unvouchered)                                        |
| HI    | 15,600/year                                         | \$45 per diem (for legislators outside of Oahu) (unvouchered)      |
| ID    | \$7/day (not in session)<br>\$30/day during session | \$60 per diem (\$35 for in town legislators) (unvouchered)         |
| IL    | 32,500/year                                         | \$69 per diem (unvouchered)                                        |
| IN    | 11,600/year                                         | \$65 per diem (unvouchered)                                        |
| IA    | 14,600/year                                         | \$40 per diem (unvouchered) (\$25 for Polk County legislators)     |
| KS    | \$49/day                                            | \$50 per diem (unvouchered)                                        |
| KY    | \$100/day                                           | \$75 actual daily attendance per diem (unvouchered)                |
| LA    | 16,800/year                                         | \$75 per diem (unvouchered)                                        |
| ME    | 7,500 (1985)<br>4,000 (1986)                        | \$50 per diem vouchered                                            |

|    |                                          |                                                                                        |
|----|------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| MD | 21,000/year                              | \$68 per diem (1984) (unvouchered)<br>\$72 per diem (1985) (unvouchered)               |
| MA | 30,000/year                              | Receive no per diem, but receive mileage for every session day                         |
| MI | 34,860 (1985) 2<br>36,520 (1986)         | Total of \$6,700 annually (vouchered)                                                  |
| MN | 21,140/year (1985)<br>22,350/year (1986) | \$36 per diem (\$23 for metropolitan legislators) (unvouchered)                        |
| MS | 8,100/year                               | \$44 per diem for actual daily attendance (none for Jackson legislators) (unvouchered) |
| MO | 18,078/year                              | \$35 per diem for actual daily attendance (unvouchered)                                |
| MT | \$50.02/day                              | \$45 per diem (unvouchered)                                                            |
| NE | 4,800/year                               | \$55 per diem (\$25 for capitol city legislators)                                      |
| NV | \$104/day (up to \$6,240) 3              | \$56 per diem (unvouchered)                                                            |
| NH | \$100/year                               | NONE                                                                                   |
| NJ | 25,000/year                              | NONE                                                                                   |
| NM | \$75/day                                 | NONE                                                                                   |
| NY | 43,000/year                              | \$55 per diem (vouchered)                                                              |
| NC | 8,400/year                               | \$60 per diem (unvouchered)                                                            |
| ND | \$90/day or<br>\$40/day 4                | \$50 per diem for legislators outside Bismarck (unvouchered)                           |
| OH | 30,152/year                              | NONE                                                                                   |
| OK | 20,000/year                              | \$35 per diem (only milage during session if legislator lives at home) (vouchered)     |
| OR | 8,400/year                               | \$44 per diem (unvouchered)                                                            |
| PA | 35,000/year                              | \$75 per diem (vouchered)                                                              |
| RI | \$5/day                                  | NONE                                                                                   |
| SC | 10,000/year                              | \$68 subsistence (vouchered)                                                           |
| SD | 3,200 (1985)<br>2,800 (1986)             | \$75/5-day week (unvouchered)                                                          |

|    |                                                                              |                                                                                       |
|----|------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| TN | 12,500/year                                                                  | \$71 per diem (unvouchered)                                                           |
| TX | 7,200/year                                                                   | \$30 per diem (unvouchered)                                                           |
| UT | \$65/day                                                                     | \$25 per diem                                                                         |
| VT | \$285/week/session (1985)<br>\$300/week (1986)<br>(maximum of \$11,000/year) | \$60 per diem<br>(23.75 per diem if legislator<br>lives at home (u. vouchered)        |
| VA | 11,000/year                                                                  | \$65 per diem (unvouchered)                                                           |
| WA | 13,750/year                                                                  | \$44 per diem (unvouchered)                                                           |
| WV | 6,500/year                                                                   | \$70 per diem (\$20 for Charleston<br>legislators) (unvouchered)                      |
| WI | 27,222/year                                                                  | \$41.63 per diem (\$20.81 if<br>legislator lives inside Dane<br>County) (unvouchered) |
| WY | \$75/day                                                                     | \$60 per diem (unvouchered)                                                           |

NOTE: DAILY SALARIES ARE PAID DURING REGULAR SESSION

- 1 Changes pending
- 2 Changes effective unless rejected by the legislature before Feb. 1, 1985.
- 3 For legislators elected before November 1982, the maximum salary remains \$4,800
- 4 \$90/day for legislators who reside in Bismarck; \$40/day for legislators from outside Bismarck

For a table of additional compensation for Committee Chairs, type  
SEE ADCOMPCC

For a table of additional compensation for Legislative Leaders, type  
SEE ADCOMPLL

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ADDITIONAL COMPENSATION FOR COMMITTEE CHAIRS  
January 1983

|                |                                                    |
|----------------|----------------------------------------------------|
| ALABAMA        | NO                                                 |
| ALASKA         | NO                                                 |
| ARIZONA        | NO                                                 |
| ARKANSAS       | NO                                                 |
| CALIFORNIA     | NO                                                 |
| COLORADO       | NO                                                 |
| CONNECTICUT    | YES                                                |
| DELAWARE       | YES (Chairs and Vice Chairs of Joint Finance Only) |
| FLORIDA        | NO                                                 |
| GEORGIA        | NO                                                 |
| HAWAII         | NO                                                 |
| IDAHO          | NO                                                 |
| ILLINOIS       | NO                                                 |
| INDIANA        | YES (Senate Finance and House Ways and Means only) |
| IOWA           | NO                                                 |
| KANSAS         | YES (Ways and Means only)                          |
| KENTUCKY       | YES                                                |
| LOUISIANA      | YES (Joint Budget Chair only)                      |
| MAINE          | NO                                                 |
| MARYLAND       | NO                                                 |
| MASSACHUSETTS  | YES                                                |
| MICHIGAN       | YES (Appropriations only)                          |
| MINNESOTA      | NO                                                 |
| MISSISSIPPI    | NO                                                 |
| MISSOURI       | NO                                                 |
| MONTANA        | NO                                                 |
| NEBRASKA       | NO                                                 |
| NEVADA         | NO                                                 |
| NEW HAMPSHIRE  | NO                                                 |
| NEW JERSEY     | NO                                                 |
| NEW MEXICO     | NO                                                 |
| NEW YORK       | YES                                                |
| NORTH CAROLINA | NO                                                 |
| NORTH DAKOTA   | YES                                                |
| OHIO           | YES                                                |
| OKLAHOMA       | NO                                                 |
| OREGON         | NO                                                 |
| PENNSYLVANIA   | NO                                                 |
| RHODE ISLAND   | NO                                                 |
| SOUTH CAROLINA | NO                                                 |
| SOUTH DAKOTA   | NO                                                 |
| TENNESSEE      | NO                                                 |
| TEXAS          | NO                                                 |
| UTAH           | NO                                                 |
| VERMONT        | NO                                                 |
| VIRGINIA       | NO                                                 |
| WASHINGTON     | NO                                                 |
| WEST VIRGINIA  | NO                                                 |
| WISCONSIN      | NO                                                 |
| WYOMING        | NO                                                 |

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 ADDITIONAL COMPENSATION FOR LEGISLATIVE LEADERS  
 January 1985

HOUSE

| State | Presiding Officer                                             | Majority Leader                               | Minority Leader                               | Other Leaders |
|-------|---------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|---------------|
| AL    | \$2/day/session                                               | NONE                                          | NONE                                          | NONE          |
| AK    | \$500/year                                                    | NONE                                          | NONE                                          | NONE          |
| AR    | \$2,500/year                                                  | NONE                                          | NONE                                          | NONE          |
| CO    | \$75/day<br>up to \$7,500<br>(during interim)                 | \$75/day<br>up to \$7,500<br>(during interim) | \$75/day<br>up to \$7,500<br>(during interim) | NONE          |
| CT    | \$5,000/year                                                  | \$4,000/year                                  | \$4,000/year                                  | YES           |
| DE    | \$193.50/month                                                | \$161.30/month                                | \$161.30/month                                | YES           |
| FL    | \$13,000/year                                                 | NONE                                          | NONE                                          | NONE          |
| GA    | \$2,800/year                                                  | \$2,400/year                                  | \$2,400/year                                  | YES           |
| IL    | \$10,000/year                                                 | \$7,500/year                                  | \$10,000/year                                 | YES           |
| IN    | \$3,000/year                                                  | \$1,500/year                                  | \$2,000/year                                  | YES           |
| IA    | \$7,300/year                                                  | \$2,500/year                                  | \$2,500/year                                  | NONE          |
| KS    | \$4,200/year                                                  | \$3,240/year                                  | \$3,240/year                                  | NONE          |
| KY    | \$75/day/session                                              | \$70/day/session                              | \$70/day/session                              | YES           |
| LA    | \$15,200/year                                                 | NONE                                          | NONE                                          | NONE          |
| ME    | \$3,750 - 1985<br>\$2,000 - 1986                              | \$1,825 - 1985<br>\$1,000 - 1986              | \$1,825 - 1985<br>\$1,000 - 1986              | YES           |
| MD    | \$5,000/year                                                  | NONE                                          | NONE                                          | NONE          |
| MA    | \$35,000/year                                                 | \$22,500/year                                 | \$22,500/year                                 | YES           |
| MI    | \$18,000/year                                                 | NONE                                          | \$8,600/year                                  | NONE          |
| MN    | \$8,456/year                                                  | \$8,456/year                                  | \$8,456/year                                  | NONE          |
| MS    | \$25,900/year                                                 | NONE                                          | NONE                                          | NONE          |
| MO    | \$2,500/year                                                  | \$1,500/year                                  | \$1,500/year                                  | NONE          |
| MT    | \$5/day/session                                               | NONE                                          | NONE                                          | NONE          |
| NV    | \$2/day/session                                               | NONE                                          | NONE                                          | NONE          |
| NH    | \$50/biennium                                                 | NONE                                          | NONE                                          | NONE          |
| NY    | \$30,000/year                                                 | \$25,000/year                                 | \$25,000/year                                 | YES           |
| NC    | \$16,644/year                                                 | \$4,104**                                     | \$2,100/year                                  | YES           |
| ND    | \$5/day/session                                               | \$5/day/session                               | \$5/day/session                               | NONE          |
| OH    | \$12,500/year                                                 | \$9,500/year                                  | \$8,500/year                                  | YES           |
| OK    | \$9,330/year                                                  | \$6,440/year                                  | \$6,440/year                                  | NONE          |
| OR    | \$700/month                                                   | NONE                                          | NONE                                          | NONE          |
| PA    | \$19,600/year                                                 | \$15,680/year                                 | \$15,680/year                                 | YES           |
| RI    | \$5/day                                                       | NONE                                          | NONE                                          | NONE          |
| SC    | \$11,000/year                                                 | NONE                                          | NONE                                          | YES           |
| TN    | \$6,000/year                                                  | NONE                                          | NONE                                          | NONE          |
| UT    | \$1,000/year                                                  | \$500/year                                    | \$500/year                                    | NONE          |
| VT    | \$6,055/year plus<br>\$50/week/session                        | NONE                                          | NONE                                          | NONE          |
| VA    | \$9,000/year                                                  | NONE                                          | NONE                                          | NONE          |
| WV    | \$50/day/session<br>plus \$100/day, up to<br>80 days per year | \$25/day/session                              | \$25/day/session                              | NONE          |
| WY    | \$3/day/session                                               | NONE                                          | NONE                                          | NONE          |

SENATE

| State | Presiding Officer                                             | Majority Leader                               | Minority Leader                               | Other Leaders |
|-------|---------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------|---------------|
| AL    | NONE                                                          | NONE                                          | NONE                                          | NONE          |
| AK    | \$500/year                                                    | NONE                                          | NONE                                          | NONE          |
| AR    | \$2,500/year                                                  | NONE                                          | NONE                                          | NONE          |
| CO    | \$75/day<br>up to \$7,500<br>(during interim)                 | \$75/day<br>up to \$7,500<br>(during interim) | \$75/day<br>up to \$7,500<br>(during interim) | NONE          |
| CT    | \$5,000/year                                                  | \$4,000/year                                  | \$4,000/year                                  | YES           |
| DE    | \$193.50/month                                                | \$161.30/month                                | \$161.30/month                                | YES           |
| FL    | \$13,000/year                                                 | NONE                                          | NONE                                          | NONE          |
| GA    | \$2,800/year                                                  | \$2,400/year                                  | \$2,400/year                                  | YES           |
| IL    | \$10,000/year                                                 | NONE                                          | \$10,000/year                                 | YES           |
| IN    | \$3,000/year                                                  | \$1,500/year                                  | \$2,000/year                                  | YES           |
| IA    | NONE                                                          | \$2,500/year                                  | \$2,500/year                                  | NONE          |
| KS    | \$4,200/year                                                  | \$3,240/year                                  | \$3,240/year                                  | NONE          |
| KY    | \$75/day/session                                              | \$70/day/session                              | \$70/day/session                              | YES           |
| LA    | \$15,200/year                                                 | NONE                                          | NONE                                          | NONE          |
| ME    | \$3,750 - 1985<br>\$2,000 - 1986                              | \$1,825 - 1985<br>\$1,000 - 1986              | \$1,825 - 1985<br>\$1,000 - 1986              | YES           |
| MD    | \$5,000/year                                                  | NONE                                          | NONE                                          | NONE          |
| MA    | \$35,000/year                                                 | \$22,500/year                                 | \$22,500/year                                 | YES           |
| MI    | NONE                                                          | \$18,000/year                                 | \$8,600/year                                  | NONE          |
| MN    | \$8,456/year                                                  | \$8,456/year                                  | \$8,456/year                                  | NONE          |
| MS    | NONE                                                          | NONE                                          | NONE                                          | NONE          |
| MO    | \$2,500/year                                                  | \$1,500/year                                  | \$1,500/year                                  | NONE          |
| MT    | \$5/day/session                                               | NONE                                          | NONE                                          | NONE          |
| NV    | NONE                                                          | NONE                                          | NONE                                          | NONE          |
| NH    | \$50/biennium                                                 | NONE                                          | NONE                                          | NONE          |
| NY    | \$30,000/year                                                 | NONE                                          | \$25,000                                      | YES           |
| NC    | \$6,600/year                                                  | \$2,100/year                                  | \$2,100                                       | YES           |
| ND    | \$5/day/session                                               | \$5/day/session                               | \$5/day/session                               | NONE          |
| OH    | \$12,500/year                                                 | NONE                                          | \$8,500/year                                  | YES           |
| OK    | \$9,330/year                                                  | \$6,440/year                                  | \$6,440/year                                  | NONE          |
| OR    | \$700/month                                                   | NONE                                          | NONE                                          | NONE          |
| PA    | \$19,600/year                                                 | \$15,680/year                                 | \$15,680/year                                 | YES           |
| RI    | NONE                                                          | NONE                                          | NONE                                          | NONE          |
| SC    | \$3,600/year                                                  | NONE                                          | NONE                                          | NONE          |
| TN    | \$6,000/year                                                  | NONE                                          | NONE                                          | NONE          |
| UT    | \$1,000/year                                                  | \$8,500/year                                  | \$500/year                                    | NONE          |
| VT    | \$6,055/year plus<br>\$50/week/session                        | NONE                                          | NONE                                          | NONE          |
| VA    | NONE                                                          | NONE                                          | NONE                                          | NONE          |
| WV    | \$50/day/session<br>plus \$100/day, up to<br>80 days per year | \$25/day/session                              | \$25/day/session                              | NONE          |
| WY    | \$3/day/session                                               | NONE                                          | NONE                                          | NONE          |

\*Presiding Officer refers to the legislative office of the President, President Pro Tem or Speaker, depending on the title used in each state.

\*\*Speaker Pro Tem

8/16/85

# Alaska legislators among highest paid in nation

## Legislative salary panel selected

by Debbie Reinwand  
Times Writer

Alaska legislators, it may pay to be an Alaska legislator, but a recent survey shows that Alaska and New York lawmakers receive paychecks that top those in other states.

While the base pay for a legislator in many California is \$38,732, per diem payments amount to about \$15,000 per year for the average elected representative. That means they receive more than \$53,732 a year, according to a report issued by the National Conference of State Legislatures.

Ranked second in annual earnings are New York legislators, who have a base pay of \$43,000 with an average yearly per diem allowance of \$4,000, for a total of \$47,000. And while a New York lawmaker can expect to earn about \$47,000, repre-

sentatives in leadership positions take home an additional \$20,000 to \$30,000 a year.

Being selected presiding officer of either house in New York adds \$30,000 to a legislator's paycheck, while the majority and minority leaders each garner an additional \$25,000.

In contrast, the Alaska Senate president and speaker of the House of Representatives are given \$800 compensation for holding leadership positions.

Of the 50 state legislatures, 43 receive per diem payments when lawmakers are in session, ranging from \$15 a day in Utah to \$85 each day in North Dakota.

While salaries in California, New York and Alaska top the legislative pay charts, officials in New Hampshire are on the bottom rung, earning \$100 per year with no

See Legislators, page A-14

Former Anchorage Mayor George Sullivan and two other prominent Alaskans have been selected to help six elected officials examine the salaries of state legislators.

Sullivan, former Fairbanks lawmaker Frank Chapados and Ketchikan Daily News publisher Lew Williams were chosen from a field of eight candidates who had expressed interest in the committee or were nominated by legislators.

They will join three House and three Senate members on the committee, established by the legislature during the past regular session.

The committee will look over a con-

troversial pay raise the Legislature voted for itself in the waning days of the 1983 session.

"I believe we had some really qualified people apply and the three chosen will do a fine job representing the views of the public in this endeavor," said committee chairman Sen. Mitch Abood, R-Anchorage.

Meeting Tuesday in a teleconference hearing, the legislators decided to choose one public member from Southeast, another from Southcentral and a third from the Interior-Bush regions of the state.

Williams, a longtime Alaska resident, has served on several statewide panels and is the lay member of the Alaska Judi-

See Salaries, page A-14

# Salaries

Continued from page A-1

cial Council.

Chapados, a member of the Alaska Railroad board of directors, is active in the Fairbanks Chamber of Commerce.

The inclusion of public voting members on the committee is a first, according to an opinion drafted for Abood by legislative legal counsel Billy Berrier. Because there is no precedent, the legislators spent part of Tuesday's meeting setting up ground rules for the upcoming session.

Under the rules, the nine-member group will need two senators, two representatives and one public representative in order to do business, and a majority of any five members must agree in order for the panel to take any action.

Among the proposals the committee will review include the establishment of a salary commission independent from the legislature. More than 20 states have similar commissions, while another 20 legislatures set their own salaries.

Abood said the panel hopes to draft a bill that will diminish public concern over legislative pay raises. When lawmakers increased their pay from \$22,000 a year to \$46,800 a year in 1983, some public groups pushed for repeal of the raise.

# Legislators' salaries

Continued from page A-1

daily allowances provided. That body generally meets for two months.

Other legislative bodies that receive minimal pay include those in Nebraska where the annual salary is \$4,800 plus a \$25 per diem allowance; Nevada, where lawmakers earn \$6,240 a year, plus \$86 a day living expenses; Georgia, where lawmakers receive \$7,200 plus \$89 a day during legislative sessions, and Maine with an annual salary of \$7,500 plus \$80 per diem.

The Alaska Legislature in 1983 voted to double yearly salaries from \$22,000 to \$46,800. In doing so, legislators terminated their \$80 per diem payments which were the highest in the nation at that time.

Many lawmakers argued that dropping the per diem payments saved money because lawmakers could claim them during session, and during the interim when a legislator was on state business. However, the pay boost did substantially increase retirement benefits for the elected officials and was subject to public concern over the ability of a legislative body to give itself a hefty raise.

A special legislative salary committee was appointed this session to study the issue and report back to the Legislature in January of 1988. That panel had its first meeting Tuesday and will look at, among other things, an independent commission to regulate salaries.

In 21 states, a compensation commission provides that service, while in another 21 states lawmakers themselves decide when they need a raise. Eight states have constitutional provisions for increases in legislative pay.

In Alaska, many lawmakers say they don't particularly care who sets their pay, as long as it's "fair" and keeps up with inflation.

"The number one factor is whether or not it costs me money to do my job," said Sen. Mitch Abood, R-Anchorage. Abood chairs the joint salary committee.

"If I'm being paid \$25,000 and it costs \$30,000 to fly 800 miles to Juneau, set up a second home and operate out of there for 120 days, then that's not equitable," he said. "I'm interested in the salary commission idea, particularly if they use economic factors when determining what we should be paid."

Senate Minority Leader Bill Ray, D-Juneau, a member of the salary panel, agrees with Abood. "You have fishermen from Kodiak, businesswomen from Fairbanks and retired folks from all over serving in this legislature. You have to pay them enough so that they can support themselves and do a good job for the people," he said.

"The pay does not have to be excessive, it has to be reasonable. If a commission can do that, fine. If we can set up legal guidelines, that's acceptable, too," Ray said.

EXAMPLES OF ADDITIONAL EXPENSE ALLOWANCES  
FOR LEGISLATURES

|                |                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                           |
|----------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| ALABAMA        |                                                                                | \$600/month for office expenses                                                                                                                                                                                 | Lt. Governor, Speaker & Speaker t<br>Pro Tem have full-time security<br>protection with car if requested. |
| ALASKA         |                                                                                | \$4,000 annual allowance for stationery,<br>and postage for constituent mailings                                                                                                                                |                                                                                                           |
| IDAHO          | Interim per diem of \$30                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                           |
| CONNECTICUT    | Interim per diem of \$65                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                           |
| DELAWARE       |                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                           |
| FLORIDA        |                                                                                |                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                           |
| GEORGIA        |                                                                                | \$4,800 allowance for district mailings,<br>stationery, etc.                                                                                                                                                    |                                                                                                           |
| HAWAII         |                                                                                | \$2,000 annual allowance for business<br>cards, stationery and parking expenses                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                           |
| MINNESOTA      | Interim per diem of \$48                                                       |                                                                                                                                                                                                                 |                                                                                                           |
| NORTH CAROLINA |                                                                                | \$209/month per legislator<br>\$770/month for Speaker<br>House Speaker Pro Tem<br>\$279/month Senate Majority Leader<br>House Minority Leader<br>Senate Minority Leader<br>\$500/month Senate President Pro Tem | 25¢ a mile for one round trip<br>home every week                                                          |
| OREGON         | Interim per diem of \$44 for<br>a scheduled cmte meeting or<br>special session | \$300/month expense allowance                                                                                                                                                                                   |                                                                                                           |
| TENNESSEE      |                                                                                | \$325/month per legislator<br>\$2,400 allowance for presiding officer<br>\$3,000 secretarial allowance<br>\$300 for supplies and postage                                                                        |                                                                                                           |