

SPEAKER NICHOL: The committee amendments are adopted. Senator Wesely.

SENATOR WESELY: Thank you. Mr. Speaker and members, I appreciate the chance to bring to you LR 23. It is a constitutional amendment co-sponsored by a number of senators, as you can see from the resolution as printed in your bill book. I appreciate all that support and I hope that we will be able to support the bill on through and place it on the ballot this year. LR 23 deals with a question I have had a concern about for some time. The question is, how do we use our time most efficiently in this Legislature? One of the things I think have been most apparent is that we waste a great deal of time in a long session like this one getting ourselves organized, electing our leadership, working out the committee assignments and getting ourselves organized essentially to begin a two-year legislative cycle. We have really started now to click in the last week or so, and the month of January...

SPEAKER NICHOL: (Gavel.) Excuse me, Senator Wesely. Please hold your conversation down so we can hear Senator Wesely. Thank you.

SENATOR WESELY: Thank you. I was saying nice things about us, how we are really starting to move on this floor of the Legislature. Want you to hear all the positive. But the negative is, as many of you know, we haven't had the best start-up always when we start in the long session. We go through an election in November and we have usually about 10 or so freshmen that are elected. That means those 10 people really can't start in doing their duties until the session starts. They don't have any staff assigned. They don't have any offices assigned, don't really have the ability to start functioning and representing their districts until about two months later when we start the session in January. We also have a situation where chairmanships are in limbo for that two month period. We aren't sure, of course, who is going to be elected chairman until that first day, opening day of the session. We don't know what staff we can hire. We don't know where our offices are going to be located. We don't know what committee assignments we are going to have and we really can't even think about bills and issues until all those issues that I just mentioned are decided organizationally. So we waste a lot of time getting