

Mr. Speaker, to open on your bill.

SPEAKER WITHEM: Yes, the committee amendment becomes the bill. Maybe I'll just comment a second or two on the rationale for the bill. First of all, Senator McKenzie was giving me a little bit of a hard time as to whether or not my county doesn't have any first class cities in it. No, this is a suggestion for a bill or a problem that was brought to my office down here from...as a result of a phone call from an individual from a small county. The state policy is a good one I think in that the county attorney should live in the county where he or she is the county attorney to be more conversant with the local issues. However, there are counties in the state and this individual who called that has lived in one of those where there just isn't necessarily a lot of housing available for those individuals and so we had two or three different approaches to the bill. I think the one that the committee came up with and I thank Senator Robinson and the Government Committee for coming up with this solution, is the simplest and probably the best, providing in these counties where there are not a lot of housing available, to live in the adjoining county if they need to. Keep in mind, Senator McKenzie asked me how many counties did not have at least a first class city in them and there really aren't very many. So for those counties that do not have a city of more than 5,000, the county attorney would be able to live in the adjoining county if he or she chose.

SENATOR HALL: Thank you, Senator Withem. Senator Beutler, followed by Senator Elmer.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Senator Withem, just a quick question. With respect to elected county attorneys, how does that work? They just...

SENATOR HALL: Senator Withem.

SPEAKER WITHEM: Let me give you the example that happened in this specific case that we heard from. How it developed was that the individual was single, was living in an office above, an apartment above the office, got married, sought housing in the county and 'here wasn't any housing available within the county.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Okay. But I'm trying to think of it from the point of view of a person who is running for county attorney.