

January 8, 1979

PRESIDENT: Motion to elect Dr. Palmer Chaplain of the Legislature. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: Mr. President, I have an amendment.

PRESIDENT: Amendment on the desk. Read the amendment.

CLERK: Senator Chambers moves to amend the Frank Lewis motion by offering the name of Ernie Chambers instead of Palmer.

PRESIDENT: The Chair will recognize Senator Chambers for purposes of speaking to his amendment.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: It is serious, Mr. Chairman. As I look at what is occurring in this Legislature, I think guidance, true guidance, is needed and I think that guidance needs to be offered by somebody who does not belong to any special interest group and who does not belong to any church, somebody who is in a position objectively to respect the sensibilities with reference to religion of everybody in this Legislature, and during those few moments when the Chaplain, who hopefully will be me, is in a position to preside, we will allow everybody to have a moment or two to contemplate what is going to be done with the day, and so that I won't deceive you by indicating it will all be silence, I might have a word or two of inspiration to offer but I assure you it will not be freighted with the baggage of any specific religion. All we are supposed to be concerned about here is wise legislation, not salvation. So I promise you that when elected Chaplain, Senator DeCamp, I said earlier, I'd rather be right than Chairman. Well, now that I have demonstrated that I am right, what more appropriate position than that of Chaplain. Chaplain Chambers. There is a nice illiteration there and I think it would give discomfiture to all of the enemies of the Legislature. We all know that it would take quite a bit of strength on you all's part to put me in that position, because if you look at the matter superficially, it seems that I am the one who is opposed to everything that the Chaplain would stand for. But if you turn it around and look at it the other way, what the Chaplain talks about is opposed by everything the Legislature does. So we will just determine where the inconsistency will lie. Another point which I think will show the seriousness of my intent, for me to be able to offer my name in this fashion indicates the nature and level of this whole talk and consideration of religion. The Legislature is not so much concerned about prayers and righteousness as it is about a possible negative reaction from the public if the Legislature would place a