

January 10, 1985

PRESIDENT: Chair recognizes Senator Wesely. Senators, the line-up for speaking is Senators Vickers, Chambers, Morehead and Beutler.

SENATOR WESELY: Thank you, Mr. President, I will be brief. I have served on the Committee on Committees now, this is the start of my seventh year. So this is my fourth experience last night. Chaos is a pretty accurate description of the Committee on Committees process. If any of you have served on the committee then you know that to be the case. I would guess probably leadership election is also similarly described as chaos. But that is just a function of our unique Legislature, being a unicameral and a nonpartisan body. When Senator Abboud talked about partisanship and everything, and I don't know that it was there as much as he sees it, but let's stick to what he is proposing here and that is a discussion on seniority. He is suggesting that everything be decided by seniority. I think those of us that have some seniority think that is not such a bad idea. I just talked to Senator Schmit and he thinks it is a great idea. I'm sure some of the rest of us that have a few years here would see similarly some benefit. But nevertheless it is really not the system that we've had, unique as it is, chaotic as it is, in this state. We have opened up the process. We have defused power. We don't have any one individual here with ultimate power over all of us. We try and spread the power around. No individual, even if they are a chairman, or speaker, or Exec Board chairman, or anything you can talk about, has got so much influence over us that they can really lead us in a way that we don't want to go. Because of that I'm not so fearful about the process that we have and maybe the chaos and the openness that we have is maybe a benefit, not a problem. People maybe really don't think about it, but a democratic process always can be chaotic. They always talk about democracy as the system that is least efficient. But it is also the most open. That is what we have in this legislative body. I don't want to change it. I think we are all disappointed from time to time on committee assignments. I know two years ago I lost, by one vote, the chairmanship of the Public Health Committee. I was the senior member over the individual who ran against me. I felt very badly about that. I certainly thought seniority should have played a role in it, but it didn't, and I lost, and life went on. The rest of you who have had the similar experience, maybe yesterday, will feel the same a little