

January 13, 1986

four to report to the floor simply because they feel that a limit is necessary. I think that the merits of constitutional amendments should stand or fall on their own and that the body is in a better position or certainly in as good a position of screening the amendments and being sure that not too many are proposed in any one election. I think...I know that this particular proposal takes away quite a bit of jurisdiction from the Judiciary Committee and I know I ought to be concerned about that because I am a member of the Judiciary Committee but let me tell you that we need relief in the Judiciary Committee. We had 109 bills last session and we had eight weeks or 24, really 22 or 23 days once the day offs were taken into account, 22 or 23 afternoons to hear all those bills which means that we were scheduling four, five, or six bills an afternoon. We were having to impose time limits on those bills. We would frequently get to five-thirty or six in the day with two or three bills yet to hear and that is just not a desirable situation. I think I would like to see the Judiciary Committee either stay at three days with jurisdiction over the most important issues involving the Judiciary and the criminal laws or go to four days and it really doesn't make a lot of difference but I know that right now we are overloaded, that we need to spill some of our jurisdiction off to other committees so we will have more time to handle the issues and can give the issues more consideration. Now finally in this debate, I would urge all of us to try and set aside concerns about how our current assignments and our current committees might be affected. We are all going to have probably significantly different committee assignments when the next Legislature convenes anyway. Rather than viewing this from the point of view of how this will affect the kind of authority I have to deal with legislation right now, I would urge you to think in terms of what is best for the Legislature beginning in 1987 and thereafter. And I think that it has come time now after many, many, many years of not having changed this committee structure at all to take a new clean look based on issues that are presented us in 1986 and adopt these thoughtful suggestions by the combined committees and bring about these changes that frankly we really do need to make. So I would urge that all of those here support these suggested amendments and I would like to concede to Senator Beutler the rest of my time.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Mr. Speaker, members of the Legislature, I just wanted to make one quick point. You have heard the