

April 2, 1975

PRESIDENT: Is there an objection to the unanimous request? Seeing none, it's so ordered.

CLERK: Mr. President, motion on the desk.

PRESIDENT: Read the motion.

CLERK: Mr. President, I move that the Legislature direct the Judiciary Committee to study the illegal gambling indictment handed down by the Federal Grand Jury in Omaha on March 31, 1975 and determine: 1) Precisely what is meant by the words "state officials"; 2) Which state officials and/or employees were involved; and 3) The nature and extent of the involvement. The Judiciary Committee shall report its findings and any recommendations to the Legislature as soon as possible. Signed, Senator Chambers.

PRESIDENT: Chair recognizes Senator Chambers.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Mr. President and members of the Legislature, a copy of this motion has been placed on each one of your desks. I have in my hand a copy of the indictment. At six different places in this indictment reference is made to state officials. At one point it mentions elected. Not one person indicted as a defendant is an elected official. The Assistant City Prosecutor, who is named as an unindicted coconspirator is not an elected. What has resulted from the wording of this indictment is the general notion of complicity of some state officials in this illegal gambling operation. What the Judiciary Committee would attempt to do is find out if there were state officials. If so, how were they involved and to what extent. If the U.S. Attorney, in putting together this indictment, did not mean state officials we want him to officially declare that to a representative body of the Legislature. That is the purpose and intent of the motion. It's very simple. It's intent is simple. What I would also like to do is have unanimous consent to print the indictment itself in the Journal, then everybody will have an opportunity to read exactly what I'm talking about and what we're dealing with.

PRESIDENT: Senator Barnett.

SENATOR BARNETT: I've just got a question of Senator Chambers on that motion. Senator Savage may want to enter into this. Ernie the only thing I question is the Judiciary Committee. Isn't the Committee on Committees assigned this responsibility? Can't they do this?

SENATOR CHAMBERS: The reason I mention the Judiciary Committee, Senator Barnett, is because it's also the law enforcement advisory committee. I felt that all of these things would be in that area, so it seemed to me to be the appropriate committee. We're not investigating the Legislature or any specific officials. We're trying to determine whether any officials have been involved with anything. I think until such time as a direct accusation can be made against somebody, it may not be appropriate for the Committee on Committees to function. That's my opinion, but somebody else may have a contrary.