

January 14, 1992

Reading to vote. There has been some concern in the past that sometimes when an effort is made to return a bill from Final Reading to Select File for consideration it is not to make a statement but, in fact, a serious effort. Sometimes on that occasion, especially if it's a surprise, the amendments and the contents of the amendment is a surprise to some people on the floor, it's important that they be informed. In the past, when that's happened some senators have left the floor assuming that we were on Select File and had that privilege. To be completely frank, strictly interpreted we are still on Final Reading. We are literally, I guess, on Select File for purposes of debate but, in fact, still on Final Reading. It hasn't been serious enough that more drastic measures were considered. For example, our Rules Committee did discuss developing a rule that would provide that you had to be in your chair, on the floor, even during that kind of a debate. However, the recommendation we made to you does understand the need for some senators who may be more concerned than others about that amendment that, in fact, was requested and was, in fact, returned to Select File, the need for some senators to have more information. So, as a result of that need for flexibility and the right of the senators to know and the possibility that they couldn't get the information they needed by simply using the phone at their desk, this amendment is offered for your consideration. And I think it's been...it's in your Journal on page 188, under (h). I will give you a chance to open it up and look at it. The way the rule now reads, it says, members shall remain in their seats during the Final Reading of a bill and until a vote...the vote thereon has been announced, except when excused by the President. And it goes on to say, or during discussion of amendments or motions offered pursuant to Rule 6, Section 8. This amendment, as you see, strikes the language "or during discussion of amendments or motions offered pursuant to Rule 6", and adds the following language. "During discussion of amendments or motions offered pursuant to Rule 6, Section 8, members may move about the legislative environs subject to a quorum call request or by any member pursuant to Rule 7, Section 5. For purposes of this rule, legislative environs shall mean the Legislative Chamber, the Senate Lounge and the hallway connecting these areas." Or, in other words, that doorway over there out from the back of the Chambers, this doorway over here out from the back of the Chambers and that hallway in between; not the cafeteria, not your office, not the Rotunda, but just that area in the lounge. You can still be, with this rule change, obviously, excused if you feel the need