

April 14, 1992

four-caucus system. It causes some hard feelings. Whether they're legitimate hard feelings or illegitimate hard feelings, they were there anyway. As an attempt then to kind of lessen the negative feelings that were going around at that time, I introduced to the Rules Committee a suggestion that we leave the four caucuses in place for choosing all other committees with the exception of the Appropriations Committee. Appropriations Committee, because of its nine-member make-up and because of its importance in the body, seemed to set it aside and make a different treatment for it to be logical. That rules change got locked up in the committee early on. I believe there were two votes to advance, one vote to not advance and two not voting. We did discuss it a little bit on the floor, but that was as an amendment to a bill and the argument at that time from the opponents was may or may not be a good proposal, it should not be in statute. Some of us were discussing the other day that it would be a shame to go home without addressing this because, if we don't, keep in mind starting after the November elections we'll begin making our plans on who sits on what committees and the system that we leave with here today will undoubtedly be the one we put into effect come next...come next January. So we talked about this, we had a Rules Committee meeting, we've advanced it to the floor. Some arguments as to why it's a good idea. I distributed to you some of the history of the membership of the Appropriations Committee. As you can see, the membership tends to be congregated in the eastern part of the state around the capitol area, and you can look at that...then it's not just a current situation. That's a situation that has been historically. There were arguments not to go to the four-caucus system...or the three-caucus system because most committees have eight members. Appropriations Committee has nine members. It would be very appropriate to have the three-caucus situation for the Appropriations Committee. I should, I guess, reemphasize what Senator Lynch did indicate. This only applies to the Appropriations Committee and the process would be basically the same as we do other committees. Other committees go through the Committee on Committees process. This would go through the Appropriations or through the Executive Board process. Each caucus would continue to choose their membership to serve on the committees. If they didn't have members that wanted to serve they could trade those assignments with other people. It is in some ways, I think, a compromise to deal with what was rejected earlier in the session. It has been somewhat of a cloud hanging over the Legislature during this session. It's something that some of us

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