

January 13, 1981

SPEAKER MARVEL: Senator Warner.

SENATOR WARNER: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, I would rise to support Senator Koch's motion, not because I expect it to pass but philosophically it raises an issue which has already been alluded to but it is, in fact, the issue. The issue is the fact that the Legislature is the only public forum that exists for the discussion of newer innovative ideas or policy changes and I do not agree that it is not a first amendment issue because it is. In fact, I have been led to understand there is a lawsuit or two filed around the country on that very basis where they have limitation on individual introduction of legislation because it does inhibit the ability of a representative of thirty some thousand people from providing their concerns before the only formal body that exists. I strongly oppose unlimited committee bills which we now have. I suspect when all the discussion is done we will end up with the 17 limit on individuals and the 10 or 15 on committee but even with 10 on committee that gives us potential over two years of at least almost twelve hundred bills to almost two hundred more than we did last year. So we are not really talking much of the limitation at all. The only issue I think that is before us is who should be responsible for proposing change in policy and I strongly believe that that responsibility ought to rest on the shoulders of each of us individually by individual introduction of legislation. It is not a restraint in any sense of the word. While I am talking let me say that my good friend, Senator Schmit, those of you who are new, when a senator uses the words "my good friend", that means you are going to take objection to something that that senator said. So my very good friend, Senator Schmit, indicated yesterday that my support for reducing it was because the Appropriations Committee was exempt. I have an amendment on the desk that takes us out from an exemption. We can live with the 10 bill limitation just as easily and readily as anyone else and perhaps even easier. As a matter of fact, and Senator Marvel can tell you that up until about seven years ago or so, the Appropriation Committee always used the bills introduced by the Governor and we amended them and it is a relatively recent practice where the committee introduced bills for the budget and then the change was primarily made one of convenience because it was easier to put out the information for consideration by the body but it is no restriction whatsoever and I think the Appropriations Committee can live with that limitation just as readily and as easily as anyone else. So I speak and will vote for Senator Koch's motion because I think the principle is right and important but realistically I hope at a minimum we end up with that 10 bill limit on committees and I'm willing to go along