

January 6, 1982

few days about this rule change. I'll try to be brief and explain it to you and defer to Senator Warner to speak at greater length. What the committee tried to do was take a rule change proposed by Senator Warner and deal with it in a way that we thought would best serve the members of the Legislature in approaching the whole question of how we deal with appropriations. Right now as you know, a lot of the work is internal in the Appropriations Committee in terms of setting limits and in dealing with the issues and the body of the Legislature doesn't really get a chance to know much about where we're at with appropriations until toward the end of the session. Senator Warner is trying to allow the other members of the Legislature a chance to see a little earlier in the session exactly where we are headed with appropriations and revenues, attempting to bring before us some time about a third or halfway through the session where we are at and what we can expect to raise in revenues and where the demands are in terms of appropriations to give us a chance to send back to the Appropriations Committee an idea of what we think we can afford and what target figure we think ought to be worked toward in developing appropriations. This is probably the main thrust of this rule change and I think it is a good one because it involves the whole Legislature fairly early on in the appropriations process. We haven't had that opportunity in the past. It also says that early on we should figure out what we think we can afford in terms of taxes that we raise for state government and state expenditures rather than waiting until toward the end of the session and just taking what we have. We take the leadership and we act early rather than late and in the reactive situation. The other factor that is involved in this rule change was holding of A bills, the tax expenditure bills and revenue reduction bills, attempting again after we talked about it early, trying to get a sense of where we are at, saying that we should really get the big picture and before we start passing A bills or appropriating funds we should wait until the Appropriations Committee process is done, they have the bills out on the floor, we pass those bills dealing with the ongoing operations of state government and the ongoing state aid programs we already have and then we start talking about bills that would reduce revenues or expend money, raise new appropriations for new programs. This would come after we take care of what we already have, and when we have a diminishing economic base in which to work, this is really a key. There were some priorities built into the rule change as proposed by Senator Warner that were taken out assuming that that issue is a separate issue so that's not in here. All we talk about is the process, the procedures, the steps we follow and I think that what Senator