

SENATOR LYNCH: Mr. President, thank you, yes, Senator Schimek, I think it is an appropriate question. The last question first, no, it does not make it a standing committee. There has been some discussion in the Rules Committee for a long time and on the floor for a long time because of the amount of money involved with this responsibility that it probably could be a standing committee. However, after talking with Senator Haberman and some others, it was agreed that it didn't have to be. Secondly, the amendment offered by Senator Warner actually changes what the original intention of the Rules Committee was and that was simply to provide that with the bill, the body, not the Executive Committee, but the body would decide, number one, who the chairman is rather than the Executive Committee, as it should with this kind of an important responsibility and, secondly, the other four, other members would be chosen by the Committee on Committees just as we do for all of the other standing committees, so it is not a complicated bill. It just simply transfers the responsibility for this committee from the Executive Board to the body. The amendment by Senator...and it also provided that the ex officio member would no longer exist, the chairman of the Appropriations Committee. That being said, it...right now it appears that mostly what we're talking about is ex officio membership rather than what we originally recommended and that's all right because that is an important part of it. This is indeed an important committee, but on the other hand, please remember that all the money in that budget wasn't developed necessarily by the Appropriations Committee or by any other committee in this body. The money in that budget is there because of negotiations between the employees of the state and the administration of the state. And there are other people who participate in that group. There are some county officials, for example, that are involved in that pension fund. I guess you could assume because it involves at least five agencies of government and affiliated agencies of government, that if you're going to have ex officio membership on that committee, rather than just have the chairman of the Appropriations Committee who represents those who are probably state employees, why not have a county official on it as well? Why not have somebody who is a teacher on it as well because there are some teachers involved and then so on? The ex officio membership is important only in that somebody should be aware of what is going on, but nothing happens in that committee except any legislation that could be developed and that's the reason the body should elect its chairman and also elect its members