

SENATOR WITHEM: Yes, Mr. Speaker, members of the body. I guess I probably should have shut my light off after Senator Lynch spoke. He said, basically, what I wanted to say. Just to reiterate, the members of the Rules Committee are currently selected, as all of the other committees are. I think what Senator Abboud suggests as a policy change, that the Building and Maintenance Committee should be chosen in that same manner, I think is a good policy change. My preference would be to leave that within the rules of the Legislature as opposed to putting it in statute. As an example, a few years ago when we made changes in our committee assignments we found it difficult to deal with the problem of the Retirement Committee. You needed a bill to change that. I think our committee structure, by and large, probably ought to be left more in the rules of the Legislature. And I think he raises good points about changing those particular rules. I would agree with Senator Lynch, though, that placing this into statute is probably not a good idea. We may, in fact, already have too much dealing with committee assignments in our statutes. The fact that we're having to spend half a morning debating, making what is a relatively simple change in a committee by passing a bill here on the floor might well indicate why we don't need more of this in the statutes.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Senator Warner.

SENATOR WARNER: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, I would rise to oppose the amendment as well, for a number of reasons, one of which is nothing more than I don't see any point in mixing some of these other committees into this particular issue that is before us. As has been pointed out, my thought was the way this outlines the Rules Committee I thought was the way we did it. So I guess that is not a change. The Committee on Building Maintenance, I thought, is in statute, as I recall, which is another one of those committees that the Chairman of Appropriations is an ex officio member, by the way, which was not at my urging. There was a chairman, one time, that thought that is how it ought to be, of the committee. I said I really didn't want to be, but if he wanted to, that was fine. As far as I'm concerned that committee was designed as an oversight committee. At the time LB 309 was enacted we had massive deferred maintenance of multi-millions of dollars, we still have that. It's been worked on, it's working well. Some oversight is appropriate, probably, but I would tend to agree it really