

January 4, 1990

matter of convenience or tradition or precedent or just simply laziness, I am comfortable with where we are now. I have no problem with the narrowness that we presently have in our rules. Frankly, I rather like those narrow parameters, a personal opinion. In any event, I will certainly live with, I will have to live with the decision of the body. At this point, thank you, Senator Lynch. I am glad we are talking about it. I will probably vote no. Thank you, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT: Senator Chambers, please, followed by Senator Withem.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Mr. Chairman, and members of the Legislature, Senator Moore is going to vote against the proposition because he thinks it opens the door too wide. Senator Barrett covered a few more bases, including that of laziness, but the wrong reasons have been given. This is a little temporizing, nothing addition to the germaneness rule. As a Legislature, we should allow ourselves as broad a field for operation as the Supreme Court does in construing the Constitution relative to what is germane to a bill. This is one of those things that will make it appear that something has been done, when, in fact, nothing of substance has really occurred. Now, you can define things in a number of ways. You can attempt to pick out characteristics of an object or whatever it is and define it in terms of those characteristics. If you can't really determine what the characteristics are, in logic, they say you can define a thing in terms of its operations. That is what people who say they believe in God, even though they don't practice what they preach, that is how they define God, in terms of his, her, it, or their operations. The finite cannot comprehend the infinite. You can do the most difficult thing in defining by trying to define a thing in terms of what it is not. The present germaneness rule tries to define what germaneness is by telling you what it is not. Anything not a jackass is not a jackass. So if you want to define a jackass in terms of what a jackass is not, then you have to name every other conceivable object that exists or can exist, and then you still haven't told what it is, you have told what it is not. It is not a giraffe. A person pictures a giraffe and will say, well, I know it is not that. It is not an elephant. It is not a microphone. You know what all these things are but you still don't know what a jackass is if you haven't seen one. A rule such as the germaneness rule often makes jackasses out of the Legislature. There cannot be consistency in the interpretation. The interpretation is based