

January 8, 1990

a proposal offered by Senator Wesely the other day. And it would require, at the end of the session on the 59th day in the short session, the 89th day in the long session, that the Legislature adjourn for five days, or recess for five days to allow us the opportunity to take a shot at overriding any vetoes by the Governor, whether they're money bills, line-item vetoes in money bills, or other legislation. I support the proposal then, I support it now. I showed up on the board as not voting so that I'd be in a position to make this reconsideration motion. The proposal came very close to having enough votes to pass, but there were some absences. And in looking at the people who were absent, I felt that were they here, we would have a chance to pass this proposal. Just a few words as to why I think we should do this. I have said repeatedly that the Legislature is the wimp in the trio of the departments of government. The Governor or the executive branch is constantly finding ways to encroach on the prerogatives of the Legislature, and the Legislature bends the knee and yields. The courts have always tried to arrogate to themselves more and more authority. The only branch that apologizes for its existence, that will not defend its turf, is the Legislature. As a member of that body, my personal pride and ego does not allow me to rest easy while we allow ourselves, as a body, to be walked on. I could separate myself and put some distance between myself and what the rest of the Legislature does. But in this instance, there is an institutional question that is important and needs to be dealt with. I believe that as a result of my having served in this Legislature there have been some changes for the better. And I would like to see this Legislature, as an institution, stronger, when I leave here, than it was when I came. The only way we can do that is to protect our prerogatives and to demonstrate by the policies that we enunciate in our rules our intention to be a Legislature, to assert our authority and to properly discharge our responsibilities. It's too easy, it's too convenient to allow a bill to be passed, go home, have the Governor veto it, then say later, she vetoed it after we were out of session and we had no opportunity to override. By institutionalizing this position, this procedure of insuring the opportunity to override I think we will be functioning in a proper and responsible way as a Legislature. So what I'm hoping is that there will be enough of us here, still present that is, to vote affirmatively on adopting this proposal. But the first thing that I need is a vote to reconsider. And that's what this motion is for, a vote to reconsider the earlier vote. And I hope that we can get the 25 votes necessary to do that.