

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Mr. Chairman and members of the Legislature, in Rule 7, 3(e), we do find the words, "Any member may call for the division of a question which shall be divided if it comprehends propositions and substance so distinct that one being taken away a substantive proposition shall remain for the decision of the Legislature." We have reached a point where the rules are being amended by the Chair because the Chair lacks the belly to uphold the rules as written. It would be similar to saying that a person offered an amendment that Senator Labedz does not like, so she wants the Chair to rule that the amendment is out of order. The Chair rules well it is in order, because this is the time to amend. So then a motion is made to overrule the Chair, which will then be done and no amendment can be offered. And we know that the tyranny of the majority can prevail. But the Legislature is in the process of making itself a public spectacle and an ethical jackass. Regardless of how the Legislature voted on a prior motion to overrule the Chair, the Chair nevertheless has the responsibility to uphold the rules and make a ruling pursuant to the rules. And the rule does say that a question can be divided, and that it shall be divided, and it's not a motion. So when the rules are to be played with in this fast and loose manner, it shows the contempt that the majority has for the rules. They'd like to say I don't respect the rules because I make use of the rules to achieve my ends. I'm the only one who consistently votes against adoption of the rules. So we have this whole...not the whole...we have the whole body minus me voting to adopt those rules, then a majority of those voting yesterday to make a travesty of the rules and disregard them. That is very, very irresponsible and it is reprehensible. This is a situation wherein we can discuss the purpose of rules that protect the system from abuse and will protect those who are not in the majority. First of all, a principle that everybody agrees with needs no vindication and needs no protection. When you have a situation where there will be controversy and conflict, you establish procedures by which that conflict is to be resolved. When we have a rule established for a certain purpose and the majority decides not to suspend the rule but just to bulldoze its way and disregard it, then it is made a travesty of the rules and nobody need pay attention to them. And it's being done on the particular issue. The right to have free speech becomes an issue when an intrusive government attempts to squelch free speech. If speech would never be menaced, there would have been no need to put a provision in the Bill of Rights protecting and guaranteeing it. So, when the government attempts to squelch it, that is the time