

rule which said you had to wait until at least the 45th day before appropriation bills could be considered, he needed to have 30 votes. Under the rules that we have now set precedent for by your votes, and, I being a part of the body, I have to probably say by our votes, though I did not support it, Senator Landis, all he had to do was ask the Chair the following question. Is it the Chair's ruling and decision that it takes 30 votes to suspend this rule? And the Chair would have said, as he would have to have said, yes, it is my decision because that is the rule. And then Senator Landis now, if we would have done this before Commonwealth, would have been able to say, then I challenge that decision. And he only needs 25 votes to do that. Or if I...if he rephrased the question, it would be, I move to overrule that position. And it takes 25 votes to do that. That's what Senator Warner was trying to explain to the body yesterday. Senator Landis got 27 votes, two more than was needed under our present system now. The rules wouldn't have been suspended and the bill would have passed. The precedent you have set in the last few days that I have been arguing on, a part of what Senator Chambers is doing, and I've been trying to make that as clear as I can, but it is a virtually impossible task to separate what I'm doing from what Senator Chambers is doing. The point I've been trying to make that the zealously that we have had to get one issue, we have compromised principles and guidelines that democratic institutions must follow even within the most stressful times. And the policies that we have undertaken today, in our zealously to achieve a small psychological victory on one side or another, has led us to the brink of some major changes on how and what bills will pass this session and following sessions. The next time this probably comes up will not be on a benign issue.

PRESIDENT: One minute.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: It will be a very, very important issue. And those of you that are saying, in a simplistic manner, hey, that's no problem, you know, we've got 30 votes on 769, if it up comes again, we just won't do that, failed to miss the point because positions change on different issues, coalitions change, and many times there will be 25 votes to do something but there would not be 30. And I guarantee you, though I have only been here, this is my third year, I have watched some of the best and I guarantee you once a precedent is set that any member of the body, if they feel strong enough, will use whatever is in their power to get their bill through.