

SPEAKER BARRETT: It has been the custom of this presiding officer to consider that when we are on Final Reading all members are to be in their seats. That is in our rule book, Senator Chambers.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Here is what I want clear. If a vote is being taken and there are members absent, I can insist that we not take the vote until every member is in his or her chair, is that what your ruling is saying? Either it is or it isn't.

SPEAKER BARRETT: If they are not excused according to our rules, that probably would be the case.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: I think it should be either it is or it isn't because I would hate to feel that this ruling is made because it is the Governor's bill. I think when the Chair makes a ruling, it shouldn't be probable, it should be, yes, I rule that it is this way or I rule it is not that way. That is what I am trying to get from the Chair so I know in the future what I am contending with.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Senator Withem, please.

SENATOR WITHEM: Yeah, just to add to this discussion and, again, to make it clear that this is not dealing with my position on this piece of legislation one way or the other, I do not support it. I'd prefer that it didn't pass. Supporting what Senator Hefner did and the way the Chair acted I know makes it more likely that this bill will pass, but I think the Chair acted properly. The rule on page 10, Rule 2, Section 3, section (h) says members shall remain in their seats during the final reading of a bill, and until the vote thereon has been announced, except if they are excused by the President or during discussion of amendments or motions offered pursuant to Rule 6, Section 8. Perhaps what the request was was not formally stated but the request, in effect, I think that Senator Hefner made was that this particular rule be enforced, asked the Chair to enforce that rule, to have members in their seats, so indicating by pushing their green button, and he was within his rights to see that that rule was, in fact, enforced and to wait until it was enforced.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Senator Landis, please.

SENATOR LANDIS: Mr. Speaker, by the way, had the request been