

March 20, 1997

LB 1272

procedure I think the procedure we followed, given the guidelines, is perfectly within order and I guess let's have a discussion on the merits of the bill and if there is better procedure to get...

PRESIDENT MOUL: One minute.

SENATOR MOORE: ...these statutory changes before the body, I'm certainly willing to listen and maybe we should address that differently but for the time being I guess the only thing I would disagree with Senator Robinson that something special was done for Senator Ashford. The only thing that was done, this is a reduction that's on the floor pulling our package to make things balance and I think that is...I guess I'm comfortable with that, I hope the body is and if there is a better way to do that in the future, I'm certainly all ears as the best way to facilitate that so we can have a complete budget discussion both on the spending increase side and the spending reduction side.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Moore. Senator Ashford, would you like to close? There is no one else wishing to...oh, Senator Withem, I'm sorry, it's committee amendments.

SENATOR WITHEM: Yes, Madam President, members of the body, the committee amendments very simply just make technical changes to the bill to clarify in statute what the introducer indicated was his intent at the hearing. We may have lost a little track of that because we were discussing other things. I will take a little bit of an opportunity though to comment on the procedure and I think Senator Moore is 100 percent correct or close to being 100 percent correct that there is nothing abnormal, given our legislative precedent, about this procedure. The Appropriations Committee has made some assumptions about how the budget can balance in order for that to balance a statutory change needs to take place. This was a bill that had been introduced. It had received a public hearing and it had actually been advanced by the Standing Committee and it is now part of the package. Now I share the frustrations that some people are having that are beginning to focus on this issue. How do you bring substantive law changes into the appropriations package and as a Rules Committee, which Senator Robinson sits on and I sit on, I think we need to spend some time talking about that and maybe honing our procedures, but this has been done countless times in my experiences here, not maybe as many in the last couple of years because we haven't had a need for budgetary