

January 11, 1995

original proposal was to make the Speaker a vocal voting member of the Rules Committee. I don't think that's essential for the input of the...for the effect of the rule to take place. And given the current makeup of the Legislature, where both the Speaker and the Chair of the Rules Committee happen to be from the same caucus, it could lead to domination by one caucus, more than may be otherwise deserved, if the Speaker were a full voting member. So I would urge the membership to support the Bernard-Stevens amendment and also support the underlying rule change.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator Withem. Senator Will.

SENATOR WILL: Thank you, Madam President, members of the body. And thank you, Senator Withem, I do need to be reminded of the humble position that I occupy every so often. (Laughter.) I would ask your support for this amendment. In fact, this was originally the concept that I favored, which would make the Speaker an ex officio member of the committee, and would keep the membership at five voting members, which obviously if we moved to six members you're changing...with a majority is needed to adopt something. I think that that is not the change that is contemplated by this concept. The concept is simply, as Senator Withem and Senator Bernard-Stevens talked about, to get input from the Speaker, to have the Speaker there when rules changes are being proposed so he or she can not only give his or her opinion about it, but also understand what the intent behind the rule changes are. So I would ask your support for this amendment.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator Will. Senator Crosby.

SENATOR CROSBY: Thank you, Madam Chair and members, again just a quick question, Senator Will, or Senator Withem, whomever, or Bernard-Stevens. The ex officio title is fine. Does that mean that the ex officio member will be able to vote?

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Senator Will.

SENATOR WILL: No, the implication behind that is that the ex officio member, the Speaker, is not a voting member of the committee.

SENATOR CROSBY: He will not vote. Thank you very much.