

January 17, 1995

And I don't think that I am interested in preventing people, I know I'm not, from talking about an issue that comes before this Legislature, any issue. And that's...and I don't think that this rule proposal does that. When we go home during session or after session the thing that I hear a lot about is questions about, well why didn't you talk about the different aspects of the welfare bill? Why didn't you talk about the various aspects of the crime bill? Why can't we hear the good points and the bad points of those bills? And those are just examples. But maybe it's because those of us who want to talk about those issues aren't aggressive enough, skillful enough to figure out a way to get to those issues and talk about them. What is wrong is when we don't talk about the issues, when we talk about things that are not relevant to whether or not this crime bill is a good bill, or whether or not the mandatory minimum sentences are good policy or bad policy, or whether or not putting a cap on welfare in two years is a good policy or a bad policy. And the reason often that we can't get to those issues is that we're stuck on some amendment to an amendment to an amendment that has nothing to do with anything. And I want to hear, I want to hear the good arguments for why we shouldn't change the welfare law, or why we should. And when I go home and people say, what are you guys doing down there, or you folks? Why don't you talk about these things? Why don't you do something so you can get to talking about the issues? That is what it's all about. Now, I don't care if Senator Withem, or Senator Coordsen, or who's in the Chair up there. I have some confidence on this decision that whoever is there is going to feel responsible enough to this body that they're going to make a responsible decision. If they go off the floor and try to work something out and it doesn't work and they come back, I think they're going to use good judgment in what they strike and what they don't strike as far as discussion on motions or amendments. Furthermore, this proposal allows the body to overrule the Chair, allows the body to overrule the Chair. A dictatorship is not possible with this proposal. There has to be some balance here. We have to have the ability to talk about things that are relevant to allow as much time as possible to talk about things that are relevant. But it's not fair for the body to be deprived of the opportunity to talk about the relevant issues. And we saw that happen time and time again last year. All that I'm interested in doing for my part is to provide the body an opportunity to talk about what we really need to talk about here, and let the chips fall where they may after the discussion occurs. And there will be filibusters with