

Board did have a hearing on this issue. There was no one that appeared to raise any objections or any concerns about the matter. Let me talk at it from a Speaker's perspective as to why I think there needs to be a change and that deals with this whole issue of appointments. Right now it is a dual function. Historically in this body, this Intergovernmental Cooperation Committee has done a number of the appointments to national organizations but more and more of those requests from the organizations are coming to the Speaker's Office. There was an incident last year, had absolutely nothing to do with the current make-up of the committee, dealing with the previous Chair of the committee where there was a vacancy on the Council of State Governments that had been a position that had been appointed out of the Speaker's Office by my predecessor, Senator Baack. A member contacted me, the member happens to be sitting fairly close to the Lieutenant Governor at the moment, indicating that he was aware that there was a vacancy and asked if I would make the appointment. I did so. Another member of the body who understood the other procedure for appointments contacted Senator Ashford, asked Senator Ashford if he would appoint him. Unbeknownst to Senator Ashford, I had already sent in a letter on behalf of one senator, unbeknownst to me, Senator Ashford sent in a letter on behalf of the other individual and so we ended up with a potentially fairly embarrassing situation with two individuals having been appointed from the same state. We had that same problem with some other appointments last session. It would be helpful if these all went through one unified process. Again, this would not go into effect until the next year. There's probably a very good indication that there will be different...

PRESIDENT ROBAK: One minute.

SPEAKER WITHEM: ...people in maybe all three of these positions next time that we reorganize and so I don't think you're looking at enhancing or detracting the power from any one individual. This does have a perspective application. Again, I would just repeat that there was no opposition to this in the hearing. It came out of the Executive Board unanimously as Senator Hall indicated. It is an opportunity for the Legislature to begin the process of leading better internal organization the way in which we do our business. I thank Senator Hall for introducing the bill and I think it has a lot of good sense and I would urge the body to advance the bill.