

before I go on, I want to respond to something Senator Kristensen said earlier about the picture of mine which exists in rogues gallery, down on the first floor. The Speaker, I think, spoke of pictures of...I mean high school pictures. Senator Kristensen spoke of a teenage picture. At the time I was of an age which in modern times would be referred to as teenage years, there were neither high schools, cameras or even the term teenager. So it was an early, early depiction of me, but it was considerably later than the time when I was what you moderns would refer to as a teenager. And I did go over there and allow them to snap four additional pictures. And because we have such a dearth of minority representation in the Legislature, they're going to put all four of them up there and it will make it look like we're a little more representative than we actually are as a state, and I don't think anybody would object. But anyway, the concern that I have about this conference would be touched on by this amendment to make sure that there are no formal proposals to amend the Constitution. And I will tell you why I'm doing that among other reasons. A packet of information was passed around by the Governor's office under a cover memo dated January 30, 1995, and included in that memo is information about what this conference is to be about. And they talked about various activities that would occur at this conference and they had mentioned proposed constitutional amendments. And here is one of the proposals, a number of individuals and task forces have recommended, for example, adding a clause to Article V of the U.S. Constitution that would provide...that would put states on equal footing with the Congress in proposing constitutional amendments. It would provide a more direct method for states to propose constitutional amendments than the unworkable and never used constitutional convention process. To depart from what they're saying, the fact that it hasn't been used doesn't mean it's unworkable. And the fact that the Constitution has not been subjected to wholesale onslaught by the states is not a bad thing. Returning to this document, quote, the founders clearly intended states to be able to initiate constitutional reform as well as ratify amendments proposed by the Congress. That is a statement whose validity people may disagree with. Quote, under this amendment three-fourths of state Legislatures could propose an amendment to the Constitution that would become valid unless, within a two-year period the Congress rejected the amendment by two-thirds votes of both houses. That is nonsense, but that's one of the amendments that they want to offer, and it was seriously discussed, seriously discussed enough to be included