

SPEAKER WITHEM: The Kristensen amendment is adopted. Anything further on the committee amendments?

CLERK: Nothing further to the committee amendments, Mr. President.

SPEAKER WITHEM: We are now discussing the committee amendments. Senator Chambers, on the committee amendments.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Mr. Speaker and members of the Legislature, I had said that I had an interest in going to this conference, but seeing how ineffective I have been within this Legislature, I don't know if I want that battle. But if you look at this document that the Governor gave us again, the page labeled with a capital B, under Conference of State Governments letterhead; "Attached are a few supporting documents for your information. A national press conference about the Conference of the States will be scheduled for a later date. After that press conference, CSG will assist individual states in coordinating press conferences in their Capitols. Also additional information on the Conference of the States will be sent out as it becomes available." This is going to be a momentous event. Despite the levity that we've had, which is always going to occur during a discussion on the floor, this may be one of the most serious gatherings of state representatives that has taken place, at least since I have been a member of the Legislature, but I don't agree with what they are setting out to do, and I think it comes from the fact that I'm a black man who has worked so hard in a white Legislature in a white state. This is just too tough a row to hoe. I was elected by the people in my district to work here among you all, so I don't have any choice. But in this document labeled, again in the packet the Governor gave us, the label of this one is the Conference of the States, An Action Plan for Balanced Competition in the Federal System, and on page 12, it says about midway down the page, the last sentence of the first full paragraph, or the second to the last sentence: It can't be any other way because Washington policy applies equally to the smallest rural town and the biggest big city. Only when public policy is formed at state and local levels can local values and standards be applied. I don't want local levels and standards to be applied. That is where the racism is. I am in disagreement with that. I am in disagreement in pretending that local governments are somehow pure and capable to carry out that which is in the best interest of all the citizens. These local governments are beholden to