

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Senator Dierks, I don't believe that there has been a full discussion yet on the amendment. Senator Withem, your light is next.

SPEAKER WITHEM: Thank you, Madam President, and members of the body. Senator Chambers, you've hooked one here. I know one of the things you do quite well is when you want to take some time on a measure is say some things that will inspire a senator to hit the light and I just have to speak on this. You've hooked me. You've hooked me. I'm going to try to be brief and not do...take...give you too much of a rest over there. But I didn't get a chance to speak on the motion to overrule the Chair, typically, because I'm up there from time to time and have a need to rule on things. I try not to get involved in the discussion on overruling different presiding officers. But I think the...I do want to comment because you have used the occasion of the ruling to fuel some of your remarks on this amendment. I would like to comment that I do think the Chair ruled correctly and I think it's ludicrous to assume that the Lieutenant Governor would, for political reasons, make a ruling that would make it easier for the Governor's vetoes to be overridden. I don't think that is the case and I think...think I would rise to the defense of Lieutenant Governor in that case and I would point out, I was originally inclined to support Senator Chambers' interpretation of the rules but...but it is clear that whoever wrote this rule, recommended this rule, whatever Legislature first adopted it did want to make a special case for motions to overrule, to override line-item vetoes. And one of the tools that the Legislature has in its arsenal, in this battle that goes on, this tug of war of powers between the executive and the legislative branch, which I think is a healthy one for our citizenry as long as it's maintained on the issues, I think it's an important one. One of the powers that we have is to override and one of the ways in which we can make overrides possible on occasion is by putting packages together, and if we put a package together and if it can attract 30 votes, then we can override. Had the Chair not been sustained, that precedent would have been destroyed where one senator could undo that package, simply through the power of division. So I don't think, number one, that the ruling was...was done for political purposes. Again, I don't think the Lieutenant Governor is ruling to...trying to make it easier to override Governor's vetoes. I think that's the impact of the ruling and I think that's good. And, for that reason, I sustained the...voted to sustain the Chair and I voted...decided to speak on this measure