

January 9, 1996

After the hearing the speaker would be empowered to force the committee to take action either voting to advance the bill, voting to kill the bill, or taking a vote that was indeterminate. The Speaker could again assign a date certain by which this action might have to be taken. If the bill, when and if the bill does get out of committee, the Speaker would be able to determine the scheduling of the proposal, which of course the Speaker does now, but this is a clarifying matter that would be intended to indicate that the Speaker could place this bill on the agenda at any time, place it at the top of the agenda and also... and probably one of the most important parts of this proposal and I'm sure one of the most controversial would allow the Speaker to determine the order of amendments and motions to be considered on the bill. So what this would do is enable the Speaker to, say a bill has 20 amendments filed to it, under current practice the... we simply take them up in the order they are filed. It is a race to the Clerk's desk to see whose amendments come up, with certain exceptions, like committee amendments and amendments of the introducer. But in general, amendments are taken up in the order that they are filed. What this would allow is the speaker could determine the order in which the amendments would come up in. So the Speaker could take a look at the bill, decide which amendments would be appropriate to move to the head of the list and what order they would be taken up in and the Speaker would make that determination as opposed to simply letting the vigorish of when the amendments are filed take precedence. So, that in a nutshell is what it is that we would have and we are assuming... the assumption behind this is that there are certain proposals that are so important that they merit discussion by the legislature without a doubt and that we would be entrusting the Speaker to determine what those proposals are and with the approval of the Executive Board and then we would be giving the Speaker power to sit down with the committee chair, determine a hearing date and require committee action by a certain date. The intent behind this is proposals that are so important that they merit the attention of the legislature are dealt with, are dealt with in a fashion that allows them to get before the Legislature if the committee, if the appropriate committee so desires and then allows them to be debated in a format that is structured by the Speaker of the Legislature. The intent here is to address the concerns that I alluded to as I began my opening that for one reason or another, because of committee scheduling, because of lack of priority bill designation,