

January 9, 1996

there is not a great deal to this amendment, I would certainly yield the balance of my time to the Speaker if he would like to address this component or the amendment or the rule change in whole. So if the Speaker would like the balance of my time, he is certainly entitled to it.

SENATOR COORDSEN: Senator Withem, you have about eight minutes.

SPEAKER WITHEM: Mr. President, between Senator Withem indicating that I am willing to answer any questions about this, and Senator Maurstad giving me his time, I guess I am in the middle of this discussion here. By the way, Senator Will I don't see on the floor right now, I have decided based on what he said before any bills I have deal with state aid to education measures, if you have any questions regarding those you can direct those to Senator Will too, so we will be even on that. Thank you Senator Maurstad, I do appreciate the opportunity to address this and I am probably going to speak and speak only once on this because I very much believe that this is a decision the body needs to make, this is not an additional power that I have gone to the Rules Committee and sought for myself or for the office of the Speaker. Nor is it one I would shirk from from exercising if the body decides that this is needed. The specific Maurstad amendment I am indifferent to, I think maybe because this is a major enhancement of authority that the Speaker would have and I am going to continue, hopefully, to speak in the third person because I think we need to view this as a power to be bestowed on the position and not on any one individual. Rules after they are amended tend to stay in place over the course of a long time period and we ought to view this not on how you would fee that I would react to this authority but on whether it is a good change for the body because this is a rule change that will be made not just for this term of the Speaker but continue on into the future. I think I will probably vote for the amendment to change it to five unless I hear from people on the Rules Committee as to why it is not a good idea to limit that number. Another possibility, another suggestion would be that these major proposals, maybe you want to limit the Speaker's ability to chose those among bills that have already been named as priority bills. So, it would not be a sole authority of the Speaker to chose that individual's ten favorite pieces of legislation but that it already would have been a priority, a priority designation would have applied to it. Another point I would like to make, is this looks like a,