

January 17, 1996

SENATOR LYNCH: Mr. Speaker and members, I'm not sure if I spoke at all so far this year. But I do want to stand up simply to say that I think it's important for us to have some confidence in our leadership. And I prefer a system where, given that, we give to that leadership some obligations and responsibilities, which I'm sure, even though I may disagree on occasion, will be done in what they think is in the best interest of the vast majority of people in this body and also for our state. I really don't belong to any clique or clack or special interest. Who wants to take a short, old fat, bald-headed, ugly, Irish Catholic Democrat into anything? But I can tell you this, that we have a system now that doesn't work, irregardless of...you know, maybe Ernie saying some of us are slow-footed and slow-witted, I don't think some of us are. We just prefer not to exercise the system with amendment after amendment just to prove something which, after all these years, I haven't been able to figure out, except to slow down the process and slow down the system. So it took a long time for me to come to the point where I'd say, yeah, let's give the leadership this responsibility, because in the past I more or less agreed that this is a debating society and we should, in fact, take all the time we want to. But it gets to the point where we no longer debate, we just exercise everybody in the room, even offend some of the people in the process of it, just to try to make some point that I don't understand at all. By the way, I've never mentioned this before, but I want to tell you all something that might be of interest to you. For years we've done some trivia things, like who talks the most on the floor. Last year there were 5 people, by the way, that talked over 50 percent of the time of the 49 of you. Think about that when you think about this issue. Also, we figure out 100 issues that we think are important, interesting and necessary for the Legislature. And then, of course, you have to have 25 votes to agree on those issues, so we begin from the bottom and work our way down from the top. And last year there were 28 of us that agreed with each other over 85 percent of the time, and nobody belonged to a clique, a clack, or association or anything else. There happened to be 16 Republicans and 12 Democrats. I think that speaks pretty well for the system. I've done this every year. It's been as low as 25, as high as 30. But I can tell you this, the leadership that we seem to have elected from both sides of whatever political party or clique might exist generally are in that mainstream. And I think that speaks well for our system as