

February 12, 1996 LB 1044

resulted in some problems. So we have to balance off the savings and the efficiency goals with the improved services goals, which I think can be accomplished by streamlining these agencies. So I want to acknowledge Senator Crosby's comments and indicate to her that that's part of my thinking as well. Senator Witek talked about the Policy Cabinet being private. And perhaps she might be misinterpreting a bit of what the process is that we're going to go through. The Policy Cabinet does actually not occur until January 1 of next year. The whole change that we're talking about doesn't actually occur until January 1. Between now and December 1 there will be a set of working groups, of employees, of private citizens and others who will be working together to come up with the details and the fine points of this proposal, that will really be the heart and soul of what we're trying to do. This is the skeleton, this is the framework that we want to work within. But the real heart and soul and flesh and blood of this proposal will have to take more time. It will evolve over a period of time, and that evolution starts December 1 of next year, and following that the '97 session. So the private meetings of the Policy Cabinet are simply to administer the agencies. Just as currently directors administer their agencies, these directors will administer the new agencies. And they do not currently have to meet in public; they are able to meet with other directors and do so in private. That is a change that we thought was not necessary, administratively. The policy issues will eventually emerge through the partnership council that will be formed, and that will...all their meetings will be public. And obviously other types of things will be made public as well. But I thought the misinterpretation might be that the development of the details of this proposal will be done by a Policy Cabinet in private. That is not what's going to happen, that is not the situation. What will happen is a series of task forces and working groups set up across the state, and over the course of the next ten months or so they will develop the details of what will follow next year. And it will all be in public and open through the hearing process here, and the Legislature will have ultimate control over any policy changes or statutory changes that come out of this. Again, I will stop at that point and again encourage you to support the committee amendments. And if you have further questions, I'd be happy to answer...

PRESIDENT ROBAK: One minute.

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