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representation on the committees. The only way to have equal representation is to have either a six- or a nine-member committee and, as you know, we now have member...committees with membership of nine, eight, seven, and six. His proposals, therefore, were to give Judiciary Committee an extra day and, to find that day, some committees would need to be combined. He also proposed to accomplish the equal caucus representation by having each committee be made up of either six or nine members, and that caucuses not be allowed to trade seats so as to maintain that equal representation. After discussion, the Rules Committee felt that six members were just not enough to have on a committee because, at certain times, members would be absent to present bills in other committees, and a compromise was reached of nine-member committees or seven-member committees, with the exception of Retirement which will remain at six. Judiciary was given one extra day to handle their heavy workload, and Ag...and Agriculture Committee and Natural Resources Committees were combined because of interrelated issues. The new name would now be Agriculture, Environment and Natural Resources. The Transportation Committee would have a new name also. It would be called Transportation and Communications to more closely show what that committee does, because approximately 40 percent of the business of that community (sic) is in telecommunications. And, to maintain the equal geographical membership, the nine-member committees would not be allowed to trade seats between caucuses. Since the seven-member committees are not divisible by three, trades would be allowed. And, finally, these rules would not be effective until January 3rd of 2001, which is the first day of our next session. Hopefully, I've explained what Senator Wickersham's original proposal was and what the Rules Committee decided. Again, you were given a copy of those rules. Hopefully, you have...have been given a chance to look at them, but I would be glad to answer any questions at this time. Thank you.

PRESIDENT MAURSTAD: Thank you, Senator Hudkins. Senator Dierks.

SENATOR DIERKS: Thank you, Mr. President and members of the Legislature. I just wanted to offer my opposition to the rules changes before us today. I guess I don't want to talk about the part too much about the fact that Judiciary will have four days.