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that committee would have four priorities. Senator Beutler?

SENATOR CUDABACK: Senator Beutler.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Senator Bourne, I appreciate very much your question, because the paragraphs that you cited are difficult to read one with the other. But subsection (b) that you cited to the end, that the Performance Audit Committee already has the ability to select two priority bills, doesn't apply to us, because even though we can have public hearings, we cannot have public hearings on bills. We can only have public hearings on investigations that are in process. So the interpretation that has always been given and which has been held to over time is that we cannot have priority bill status. And then that is the reason why we seek to have a separate indication that we can do that. And it would be just for two; in no way would it be for four. Thank you.

SENATOR BOURNE: Thank you for your explanation, Senator Beutler. So what you're saying is, is that even though the Performance Audit Committee is authorized to hold hearings, you're saying that under section (b) you do not get a priority now; under Rule 5, Section 5, you do not get a priority for two bills as it is now?

SENATOR BEUTLER: That's right. Under current law, because it says "public hearings on bills," we do not come under subsection (b), we do not get the benefit of subsection (b).

SENATOR BOURNE: Okay. I see exactly what you're saying now. Okay. Thank you very much, Senator Beutler.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Bourne. Senator Engel, on the amendment.

SENATOR ENGEL: Mr. Speaker, members of the body, I interpreted it the way that Senator Beutler did also, because I served as that Chairman for several years. And I just wanted to emphasize the importance of being able to designate two bills, because in the past, so many times, something would come out of our committee where you had to have a bill introduced, but many