

F I N A L R E P O R T

LEGISLATIVE PROCEDURES STUDY COMMITTEE

January, 1983

The Legislative Procedures Study Committee was established by the Legislative Council to study the legislative procedures used by the Iowa General Assembly and in other states and to make recommendations for more efficient legislative procedures.

Members serving on the Study Committee, which included an equal number from each house and each political party, were:

Senator Calvin O. Hultman, Red Oak, Chairperson
Representative Lester Menke, Calumet, Vice Chairperson
Senator C. Joseph Coleman, Claire
Senator C. W. (Bill) Hutchins, Guthrie Center
Senator Lowell L. Junkins, Montrose
Senator John N. Nystrom, Boone
Representative Frank Crabb, Denison
Representative William H. Harbor, Henderson
Representative Jean Lloyd-Jones, Iowa City
Representative Joyce Lonergan, Boone

The Study Committee was authorized three meetings and one was held September 16, 1982. At that meeting Senator Hultman was elected Chairperson and Representative Menke was elected Vice Chairperson.

The Legislative Service Bureau, in consultation with the Secretary of the Senate and the Chief Clerk of the House, developed a list of discussion questions relating to committee procedures, optional means of bill consideration, fiscal note procedures, amendments, session deadlines, the appropriation process, staff organization, pre-session organization, and public information functions, and this listing was used to guide the discussion at the meeting.

Although the Study Committee did not make formal recommendations, a number of suggestions and comments were made at the meeting as the members reviewed the discussion questions. A copy of these comments is attached to this report.

COMMENTS MADE

at the

LEGISLATIVE PROCEDURES STUDY COMMITTEE

September 16, 1982

COMMITTEES

1. Provide an orientation specifically for committee chairpersons especially with regard to setting session and meeting goals and procedures for holding public hearings.
2. Provide for committee chairs to determine important session issues at the beginning of the session and use subcommittees to develop recommendations and bills for the issues.
3. Use standing subcommittees with broader subject areas than a single bill. (Discuss with NCSL personnel.)
4. Reduce the numbers of standing committees and correspondingly reduce the number of committee assignments of the members. (Example: merger of cities and county government committees and establishment of a small business committee.)
5. Vary the length of committee meetings based upon the workload.
6. Use committee hearings for testimony from a specified number of interested or expert persons.
7. Develop proposed guidelines for public hearings.
8. Adjust the jurisdiction of the committees to even out workload. (Determine the number of bills assigned and number reported out during the last General Assembly.)
9. Set a time limit for subcommittee consideration of a bill.
10. Develop a rule to define a committee chairperson's authority to alter errors and perform corrections in bill drafts that have been voted out of committee.
11. Develop more uniform committee rules regulating the flow of bills.
12. Adequately use staff assigned to standing committees.
13. Provide for recommitment of a bill to a time certain for consideration of floor amendments. (Mr. Garrison is to suggest a procedure.)
14. Encourage that all bills be filed with the standing committee considering a bill. Perhaps committees might endorse individually-sponsored amendments.

BILLS

15. Add revised explanations to reprinted bills.
16. Provide for greater use of computers in the amendment process.
17. Use skeleton bills (only title and explanation). What problems have other states had?
18. Restrict amendments offered to the Code Editor's bill.
19. Require that bills that increase state spending list sources of revenue to recoup the costs. (Check on Texas and Maryland rules)

STUDY BILLS

20. Identify sources of study bills.
21. Have the Legislative Service Bureau review study bills as to form before they are reported out and either list changes that should be made or make changes to put the study bills into proper form attaching a list of changes made.

GENERAL

22. Consider changes that will reduce printing costs.
23. Obtain more information on consent calendars.
24. Alter the time of consideration of rulings on germaneness.
25. Provide more specific rules on germaneness.
26. Have the Fiscal Bureau and the Service Bureau jointly determine whether a fiscal note is needed. (Prouty and Garrison concurred)
27. Determine a procedure for handling fiscal notes for amendments and study bills.
28. Restrict the offering of floor amendments to a certain time in advance of debate or require that individually-sponsored amendments be endorsed by the committee from which the bill was reported out. (See Committees #14)
29. Remove the Lieutenant Governor from the legislative process.
30. Review the current session deadlines.
31. Determine (if session deadlines are to be kept) whether there should be different dates for consideration of individual and committee bills. (Menke will meet with Chief Clerk and Secretary) Chief Clerk and Secretary will determine how many individually-sponsored bills were made into committee bills.

32. Advisability of developing a legislative budget separate from the executive budget.

33. In the appropriations process, should revenue or spending be determined first?