

SENATE FLOOR PROCEEDINGS: January 18, 2011

*Excerpted from the Senate transcript of the Senate floor proceedings
for Tuesday, January 18, 2011, 3:00 p.m. – 3:40 p.m.
<http://www.nysenate.gov/event/2011/jan/18/senate-session-01-18-11>*

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(at 35 mins.)

SENATOR LIBOUS: Thank you, Mr. President.

Mr. President, I hand up a privileged resolution by Senator Skelos and ask that it be read in its entirety. And I ask for its immediate adoption, please.

THE PRESIDENT: The Secretary will read the privileged resolution in its entirety.

THE SECRETARY: By Senator Skelos, Senate resolution providing for the adoption of the rules of the Senate for a certain period of time.

"RESOLVED, That the rules of the Senate, as adopted pursuant to Senate Resolution Number 7 on January 5, 2011, are hereby adopted for the period of January 5, 2011, through February 1, 2011."

THE PRESIDENT: The question is on the resolution. All in favor signify by saying aye.
(Response of "Aye.")

THE PRESIDENT: Opposed, nay.
(No response.)

THE PRESIDENT: The resolution is adopted.
Senator Libous.

SENATOR LIBOUS: Thank you, Mr. President.
Mr. President, there will be an immediate meeting of the Finance Committee in Room 332, which will be followed by a Rules Committee meeting right after the Finance Committee. We'll have the Senate stand at ease, but I would announce to the members that no legislation will be taken up today. When we come back in, we'll just have the reports of the committees.

THE PRESIDENT: Thank you, Senator.
There is an immediate meeting of the Finance Committee in Room 332, followed immediately by a Rules Committee meeting.
And the Senate will now stand at ease.
(Whereupon, the Senate stood at ease at 3:45 p.m.)

(Whereupon, the Senate reconvened at 4:26 p.m.)

SENATOR LIBOUS: Mr. President, there will be an immediate meeting of the Rules Committee in Room 332, and I ask that the Senate --

ACTING PRESIDENT FLANAGAN: Senator Sampson.

SENATOR SAMPSON: Point of personal privilege, Senator.

SENATOR LIBOUS: Absolutely, Mr. President.

ACTING PRESIDENT FLANAGAN: State your point of personal privilege, Senator Sampson.

SENATOR SAMPSON: Mr. President, about two hours ago our conference received rules reform, a resolution dealing with rules and governing the Senate chamber for the next two years. What I'm asking the Majority is although we did ask you to give us these rules changes before next week, we didn't expect to receive them two hours before we were going into session today. These rules are too important, especially when we're dealing with governing this chamber and the way we conduct our business for the next two years, particularly not only dealing with possibly close to upwards of a \$11 billion budget deficit this year but also next year.

We believe that this course of conduct, when we're talking about restoring decorum and respect back to the chamber and working in a bipartisan fashion to deal with the economic impact that is truly going to destroy a lot of things that we believe in throughout this state and also this economy -- we believe that more time is needed, especially when we're dealing with these rules. When we took over the majority in 2009, we had public hearings dealing with these rule reforms. Certain changes were made. We're just asking at this point in time, to receive these changes two hours before we went into session today, we feel that this disenfranchises the people who have sent us to Albany to represent them.

In November, people wanted change and they got change. And they wanted government to do things differently. But we are going backwards. When I remember, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle vehemently talked about the process, talked about how you weren't involved, talked about how you're getting these documents an hour or two hours before we engaged into vital, vital debate on certain issues.

This is all about establishing decorum but, most of all, respecting the voters who have sent us to Albany to represent them here in this State Capitol.

That is my point of personal privilege, meaning that a document of such importance, we should put the consideration of the rules until next week, Mr. President.

Thank you very much, Mr. President.

ACTING PRESIDENT FLANAGAN: Senator Sampson, I appreciate your point of personal privilege, but we are at a point now where the Rules Committee is going to be meeting in Room 332. The Senate will be standing at ease.

The points you raise, while they may be well-taken in a different context, are out of order now because, frankly, we don't have these reforms before the house right now.

We have to go to committee. Your comments presuppose action that has not been taken by the committee. Therefore, the Rules Committee should meet in Room 332.

Senator Libous.

SENATOR LIBOUS: Thank you, Mr. President.

ACTING PRESIDENT FLANAGAN: The Senate will stand at ease.
(Whereupon, the Senate stood at ease at 3:26 p.m.)

(Whereupon, the Senate reconvened at 5:12 p.m.)