

STATE OF ALASKA
THE LEGISLATURE

LEGISLATIVE AFFAIRS AGENCY

POUCH Y - STATE CAPITOL
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99801

January 23, 1967

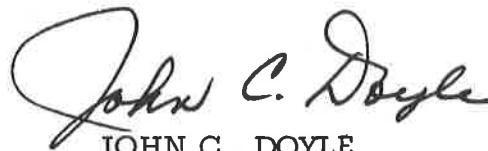
MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: Suggested Changes for the Uniform Rules

TO: Chairmen and Members
House and Senate Rules Committees

Attached are five recommendations for changes to the Uniform Rules for your consideration at the time you discuss possible revision of the Uniform Rules of the Fourth Legislature before adopting the permanent rules of the Fifth Legislature.

The recommendations for your consideration are based upon the observation and experience of the undersigned. A comment is appended to each suggested change.



JOHN C. DOYLE
Executive Director

Attachments (5)

STAFF SUGGESTION FOR CHANGE

RULE 1 (e), ORGANIZATION OF FIRST SESSION (Committee on Committees)

In the first sentence delete the portion which reads:

[REPRESENTING THE FOUR MAJOR SENATE DISTRICTS]

Comment:

The stricken language became obsolete with the court approval of reapportionment. It is now a dead letter but should be removed from the Rules. The Rules Committees may wish to consider a substantive substitution, e.g., the mention of the four judicial districts, but this is a policy question.

STAFF SUGGESTION FOR CHANGE

RULE 20. DAILY CALENDAR

After first sentence, add a new sentence reading:

The contents of the calendar are restricted to the official business of the day and formal procedural announcements.

Comment:

This addition is intended to keep the Calendar an official document and to avoid having it used for social announcements, jokes, and other unofficial matters which may be taken care of by other means. A new form has been developed to give the Calendar more dignity.

STAFF SUGGESTION FOR CHANGE

RULE 25. COMMITTEE RECORDS

Add a new subsection to read:

(d) Committee chairmen are responsible for delivering, on receipt, at the end of each session, all bills, resolutions, committee correspondence, minutes, papers and documents, to the clerk or secretary of his house. The materials will be kept on file by the clerk or secretary during the life of the legislature and then delivered to the legislative affairs agency for disposition.

Comment:

In the past, committee materials, many of value in determining legislative intent or for research purposes, have been left in lockers, thrown out or taken home by committee chairmen. In many instances the materials were the only copies of the information available. If the materials contain something which the chairman wishes to study at home, a duplicate copy can be made on legislative equipment. Requests for return of materials have been unavailing.

STAFF SUGGESTION FOR CHANGE

RULE 25(a). COMMITTEE REPORTS

The subsection now reads:

(a) A committee acts on all bills referred to it and reports its actions and recommendations to the house as soon as practicable. Committee reports must be in writing and the report must be signed by a majority of the members of the committee. The report will note the recommendation of each member signing the report.

It is suggested that the rule be changed to specifically require that the "report" be a majority report and not be a non-report with a majority of the members reporting a diversity of recommendations which are meaningless to the house. If the majority cannot agree on a recommendation it should so report but not have its "report" actually consist possibly of as many divergent views as there are members. Better still, it might be better that the committee hold the bill until a majority of its members can come to and report a majority conclusion. The record indicates that a majority recommendation was the original goal of the Rule but the situation has since deteriorated to a point where some committee reports merely try to share the committee's confusion with the house in the guise of a report.

STAFF SUGGESTION FOR CHANGE

RULE 45. TIME LIMIT ON BILLS

Amend to read:

RULE 45. No bill or resolution other than one sponsored by a standing committee may be introduced after the thirty-fifth day of a [THE SECOND] regular session of the legislature. Personal requests for bills or resolutions may not be accepted by the legislative affairs agency after the thirtieth day of any regular session. No bill or resolution other than one sponsored by a standing committee may be received in the other house after the forty-fifth day of any regular session.

Comment:

From the staff point of view the absence of a time limit for the introduction of bills during the first regular session has proved chaotic. As it is now, members may be requesting research and drafting up until the day of adjournment and this precludes providing adequate service to the committees at the time when they need it most. The 35th day provision, which now applies only to the Second Session, would give each member approximately 95 days, including the prefiling period, to make their requests and have them filled. The new sentence would meet another problem, the flood of "deadline" requests on the eve of the deadline which have in the past resulted in too hasty drafting, neglect of committee support, miffed legislators, and exhausted staff members.