

From: Jeff Gossett <JeffGossett@scsenate.gov>
To: SENATORSENATORS@sclpits.local
Date: 6/26/2018 7:02:12 PM
Subject: Senate Session & Message from Sen. Leatherman

Senators --

As you are aware, the Senate will convene at 12 noon tomorrow. The only items that are available for consideration are those authorized by the sine die resolution; primarily conference committee reports. Many of you have asked about Thursday-- the Senate also will be in session Thursday morning.

I look forward to seeing you tomorrow.

Jeff

Please read the below message from the President *Pro Tempore*, Senator Leatherman:

June 26, 2018

Dear Senators,

As President *Pro Tempore*, I feel compelled to once again address the issue of decorum in the Senate Chamber.

Many times we have discussed maintaining decorum in a general way. Today, I would like to address two specific issues that are increasingly deteriorating the decorum in the Chamber and are direct violations of Rules the Senate has adopted to address these situations -- the extended introduction of visitors and inviting guests into the Chamber.

I am sure you are aware that over the past few months, there have been a number of session days in which Senators have spent nearly two hours on introductions alone. Rule 7B limits the introduction of visitors to "not more than two minutes." This limitation also includes the time spent reading resolutions in conjunction with the introduction.

I am asking all Senators to abide by this Rule. Hopefully, this time limit will not have to be enforced by the President, but in the future I will insist that he do so.

Second, there is great concern regarding the dramatic increase of individuals invited into the Senate Chamber. Traditionally, this has been a great honor reserved only for special occasions or individuals. It is now happening multiple times every week with little or no notice to the Senate.

Rule 35 requires Senators to request approval of the Invitations Committee in writing, two weeks in advance before individuals can be allowed inside the Chamber. This should be the only method of inviting guests behind the rail and only should be requested with great respect for the work of the Senate.

I have had a conversation with the Invitations Committee Chairman, Senator Davis, and asked him not to entertain any unanimous consent requests that violate the two-week requirement of Rule 35, and he will strictly enforce this rule going forward. These last minute requests put the Senate in the untenable position of requiring an objection while the person being invited is standing in the ante chamber. The Rule was specifically created so that Senators would not be placed in that position. Rule 35 is simply being ignored and it is unfair to everyone, especially Senator Davis.

I know many of you share these concerns and I ask for your support and insistence on following these Rules. If done properly, there is ample time to appropriately honor constituents who are visiting the Senate while respecting our institution and your fellow Senators.

Sincerely,

Hugh K. Leatherman, Sr.
President *Pro Tempore*