

The CHAIRMAN. Mr. Wiggins, unfortunately, I was out of the room when you testified. I shall not attempt to rehash what has been said, or the questions that have been asked.

I wanted to approach this just briefly from another angle. The thing that has bothered me ever since this controversy arose after the other body rewrote this bill is whether under the circumstances that exist under the action that was taken by the other body, would it or not be your opinion, as a Member of the Congress, that the usual procedure should be, after all of these amendments that we are adding to the bill, one of two things: either the Committee on the Judiciary should reexamine the bill and correct such flaws as it might see fit to improve the bill either from the point of view of making it stronger or weaker or expressing the will of the House and the committee, or it should go to conference?

Does the gentleman care to express himself about that?

Mr. WIGGINS. Yes, sir; I would be happy to.

I would settle for conference. But in terms of what is best, I believe it would help this bill and would not affect adversely its ultimate chances of passage if the Judiciary Committee of this House had an opportunity to work on the language of the bill because of the kind of legislation you expect to be drafted on the floor of the body. It really does not give due credit to the Congress, in my opinion.

The CHAIRMAN. As a matter of fact, this bill was largely written on the floor of the other body.

Mr. WIGGINS. That is the problem. I agree, sir. That is the problem. It would help the bill to go to the House Judiciary Committee, but short of that, it would help also to go to conference.

I wish the chairman would consider whether or not this matter is of such overriding urgency to require special action to be taken by the House.

We have open housing legislation in most of the large, industrial, Northern States. We have it right here in the District of Columbia. We have it in my State of California.

This is not as if we are all of a sudden confronted with an emergency problem that we must meet tomorrow afternoon. It is something we should handle carefully and use our best judgment.

The CHAIRMAN. I am sure the gentleman has given more thought to this than I have, and possibly is much more capable of arriving at the proper conclusion. Wouldn't the effect of this be to preempt the State laws? There is some confusion about that, I understand.

Mr. WIGGINS. The language of the bill, as you know, specifically disclaims any attempt to preempt the State law.

The CHAIRMAN. That is in one provision, isn't it?

Mr. WIGGINS. Yes, sir; I believe it is in title I that the language occurs. I also believe in title VIII that language occurs.

The Congress, if this bill is passed, would say it is not preempting State law. I am concerned, however, that Congress is getting its nose under the tent into an area which quite properly ought to be reserved to State governments.

You see, Mr. Chairman, I believe very strongly, and I am sure the chairman does as well, in the viability of State government. The way