

Joe Strickland
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Objects: La Salle Stenotype Machine

Davis, Davis, and Davis

Joe Strickland describes reporting a committee hearing and methods of differentiating between Members with the same last name.

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Well, in a committee setting where there is so many people, seating charts are your friend. So we always make sure we have a seating chart so that you can make sure, you know, which one is which, right? Smith, Smith, Smith, Smith, Smith, right? Different reporters do it different ways. Some reporters write numbers. I don't like to do that. They'll do one, you know, one-Davis, two-Davis, three. I don't like to do that. I would always make up different ways of writing that same word. So you could write Davis. Or you could write Dave. Or you could write Da. Or you could, you know, you can think up things. If the Member's name is, is J. Davis, you could write Dave with a J at the end, "Daj," or you know, you just have to come up with something, and then remember what you came up with so that you make sure it makes—now, one thing that helps in committees—doesn't help in the House Floor—but one thing that helps in committees is they speak in order usually. They're going down the row. They're going down the row. So, you know the order that they're sitting in. So, that helps keep people straight. Now, on the House Floor, the reporters are sitting in the well. And the Members just walk up. And the Speaker says, you know, "The gentleman from California is recognized." He never says his name. So you have to either know who the gentleman from California is or we have clerks who sit behind us on the front dais. And they're writing down that's Davis of such-and-such. Or that's Jones of such, you know. And they're giving us a little yellow sticky note of who the speakers were in the order that they spoke. So we have a, a failsafe there. But in a committee hearing, it's a little easier to sort of keep tabs because you've got, you've got a seating chart. You've got the fact that they're sitting on a dais in a prescribed seniority order. And that helps, too, so.