

SENATOR NEWELL: Mr. President, members of the body, I rise to support the Stoney amendment. I, like many of the Legislators that have spoken on this issue, had some concerns about just exactly what it would do and what it would mean. My first concern is one that was expressed by Senator Maxey and that was, does the guardian ad litem, and I don't like those Latin terms, would they have to be a lawyer? In order to bring some sort of action, etc. before the court, that's exactly what they would have to be. My concern was originally that it should be someone that the children know who know the family situation and could best be able to represent those children and determine from those children what their interest might be, what their desires might be in the dissolution of a marriage or in other situations which might come before the court relating to the family. This guardian ad litem has to be a lawyer because he has to be able to bring these actions before the court. I think that this is a solution to a problem. I think it would help find for the children what is in their best interest and it would also simplify the court procedure by taking and dealing with it all at one time. In the absence of family courts which this state does not have and I think we ought to look at that sometime. I think Senator Carsten is looking at family courts. Is that correct, Senator Carsten? There is a study committee and people looking at that possible solution for a long term and long range solution to dealing with family problems. I think in a short term solution which may in fact end up to be a long term solution, that this guardian ad litem in Senator Stoney's amendment has a great deal of merit. It is one way in which the child's interest can be protected and it doesn't mean the child is going to be taken away and I think Senator Mills understands that. It doesn't mean that the parents will have nothing to say, it just means that the children's interest will also be protected during this court proceedings. The court has always had the power to take children away from their parents if they determine that they weren't responsible or if there was some other problems, but this would say simply that the children have and ought to have a voice in that court proceedings in any dissolution of a marriage or anything like that and I think it's very beneficial. I would rather see a family court system, but in the absence of a long term and complex solution to family problems like that, I think this guardian ad litem that Senator Stoney is proposing is very meritorious proposal and one that this body should adopt. Thank you.

SPEAKER LUEDTKE: Senator Clark.

SENATOR CLARK: Mr. President, I don't think we're going to finish this anyway. I would move that we adjourn until 9 o'clock tomorrow morning.

SPEAKER LUEDTKE: We have a couple more to speak yet. Do you have anything to read in?

CLERK: Mr. President, Senator Hefner would like to be excused Thursday and Friday of this week.

SPEAKER LUEDTKE: There are several lights on, Senator Stoney. I suppose it will go on probably for quite a while yet.

SENATOR NEWELL: Is there some way to determine...? Bob, would you be interested in trying to come to, you know, is