

April 5, 1978

LB 566

PRESIDENT: Well, I guess we're going to have another bill, with a lot of enthusiasm. LB 566.

CLERK: LB 566 was a bill introduced by Senator Doug Bereuter of the twenty fourth district. (Read title to LB 566.) The bill was read on January 4, 1978. It was referred to the Judiciary Committee. It was advanced to General File. There are committee amendments pending by Senator Barnett's Judiciary Committee, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT: Senator Barnett.

SENATOR BARNETT: Thank you very much, Lieutenant Governor Whelan. I'd move for the adoption of the Committee amendments and they are quite lengthy. They are two words, "or approved", and what it is, on page two of the bill, any child placement agency licensed by the Department will have to examine these adoptions. We took out the words "or approved". So any agency that is licensed by the Department, I believe, Welfare and Senator Bereuter will cover that, we felt that every agency should be examined, every person should be examined that wants to take and adopt one of these small persons and under these conditions we feel that you should adopt this amendment. That's all, Lieutenant Governor. Mr. Whelan, that's all. Thank you very much. Move for the adoption of the amendment.

PRESIDENT: Record your vote. Have you voted? Record.

CLERK: 25 ayes, 0 nays on the adoption of the Committee amendments, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT: They are adopted.

CLERK: Mr. President, Senator Bereuter moves to amend his own bill. (Read Bereuter amendment found on page 1667 of the Journal.) That's offered by Senator Bereuter.

PRESIDENT: Senator Bereuter.

SENATOR BEREUTER: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, that amendment is relatively simple and straightforward so I will discuss the whole bill at this time. This bill requires that whenever a petition for an adoption is filed, the County Judge shall request an investigation. The investigation must be conducted by the Department of Public Welfare or licensed child placement agency and the findings must be presented to the Judge before the hearing. The agency is to consider facts related to the minor child and to the person or persons petitioning to adopt the child. The purpose of the investigation is to provide assurance that whatever actions are taken are in the best interest of the child. I should first explain and this is quite essential to remove any kind of doubts in a number of people's mind, that the majority of these investigations have been conducted and will be conducted by child placement agencies. As a matter of fact in the past, most adoptions took place between family members and through adoption agencies, licensed adoption agencies. Now, however, we have seen in the past few years a black market or a gray market in babies, babies being placed sometimes for money, sometimes without money passing hands with couples who wish to have those children for adoption purposes. In many states they have a preplacement adoption. Nebraska does not have any. What we're proposing in this bill is to take one step that a great many other states have taken and that is require

08539