

societal problem for all of us to address. There were a group of very fine professional people from a cross-section of private agencies that were on that task force. I want to make it very clear that any remarks that I make today in relation to this issue are not because I represent a consensus from that task force; they are only remarks that I am making out of personal knowledge that I've either gained by participation in that task force and all those people who had input into its outcome. Likewise, I want to commend Senator Johnson for presenting this issue to us in this form. We're going to find that we don't agree on everything presented here. But I can tell you that there are enough good things in this bill that it would be a serious mistake to kill it. Even though you do not agree on everything, it is worth your time to pay attention to the issue and how it impacts society. For one reason, from the task force I think that we learned that if you can get at the route problem of this, be it lack of self-esteem, be it lack of decision-making skills that oftentimes cause young people to find themselves, both young boys and young girls, in a situation where there is an unwanted pregnancy, those same underlying insecurities, lack of goal-making, apply not only to teenage pregnancies, but they apply to our drug and alcohol problems also; the peer pressures, whatever it is, those are the underlying problems. That is why I'm saying there is good in this bill, don't kill it, instead move it forward in a fashion that you can accept and especially the sections of it that you can accept for the good of society. Now, in light of that, I will be happy, and I will support Senator Marsh's amendment. I will support Senator Johnson's bill, regardless of whether it is amended or not amended, because of my basic philosophy and the fact that I think there are so many good items in this particular piece of legislation. When we talk about prevention we know that we, as a society, have been pouring thousands of dollars into the aftereffect causes of this. In our mental retardation areas, because of low birth weight babies, we spend thousands of dollars. It is behoove...we should be behooving, in this particular case, to address the problem in how these young people can avoid this situation and how we, as society, can avoid it. So, from that standpoint, I certainly am going to support Senator Marsh's amendment. I do believe that Senator Johnson also addresses that. Now, maybe you like the wording in Senator Marsh's amendment more than in Senator Johnson's bill. But I do believe that Senator Johnson also addresses very strongly where the dollars go before this crisis occurs rather than after. It is not just the young people that are impacted.