

I rise in support of the Hillman amendment. One of the main reasons that I support the Hillman amendment is I think it focuses the Legislature's attention on where it should be and that is on some of the larger issues that affect the specific issue that we're discussing here. Senator Hillman would suggest examining the creation of an entity within the Department of Health that would look into some of the problems that bring teenagers and adolescents to the point where they do run into trouble. And I think that's where the Legislature needs to be looking. An interesting thing happened a few years ago in the Legislature. One of my predecessors, as a representative of the Eighth Legislative District, brought a bill to the Legislature that was a comprehensive approach to dealing with the issue of teen pregnancy and it was...it was modeled after a piece of Wisconsin legislation. And it involved a number of different things as far as education goes, as far as prevention, as far as treatment of teens that find themselves in problem situations. It involved the educational system, public schools as well as private entities. It established a system of grants that would have been available to people who specialized in assisting teens in a very...in dealing with various problems. And the interesting thing about the bill was that everyone opposed the bill. The pro-choice people opposed the bill because it had some restrictions in it on what could be taught in the public schools with respect to things like contraception and abortion. The pro-life people opposed the bill because it had some counseling in there for pregnant teens that they feared would result in recommendations of abortion. In fact, the school districts opposed the bill because it, in effect, would have required them to establish some new programs that would have cost some additional dollars and there was no funding mechanism within the bill. In fact, what happened was that every entity that was involved at all ended up opposing this piece of legislation and it was ironic because it truly was one of the few pieces of legislation, I think, that we have seen that represents a compromise on issues of this type that represented an attempt to get all sides together in a positive, constructive approach to this issue. And I think that...that experience demonstrates one of the fundamental problems in dealing with issues in the area of abortion, in the area of teen pregnancy, and that is that when we talk about bills like LB 78 they're very specific. They generally when we talk about bills in the areas of abortion they attempt to make illegal or legal a specific act, they attempt to require parental notification, to require a waiting period, and those tend to be very easy for