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April 16, 2002 LB 952

referred to the Health Committee; advanced to General File. I do have Health and Human Services Committee amendments. (AM2472, Legislative Journal page 475.)

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: Senator Burling, you're recognized to open on your bill.

SENATOR BURLING: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and members of the Legislature. LB 952 is a bill that relates to adoption. I want to thank Senator Jensen and the Health and Human Services Committee and this staff for assisting me in the interim study. And then in passing this bill from committee hearing unanimously to the floor. And I want to thank Senator Maxwell for prioritizing this bill. Adoptions are becoming more common, more open, and more acceptable in our society and I think our laws need to keep up with that. And so over the years in visits with various people who have been concerned about the difficulties of heirs of adoptees to acquire identifying information for genealogical purposes, I introduced this bill. Through that research, I came up with some other areas that I thought needed to be identified, and so I'll try to explain those as best I can at this time. Now, this bill deals with situations where presumed nonconsent or nonconsent forms are in place. If consent forms are in place, there's no problem. Otherwise we need this bill that deals with nonconsent forms. Nebraska's law currently is unclear about the right of adopt...heirs of adoptees to research the records for genealogical purposes. And this legislation that I'm introducing seeks to make all the adoption records available to heirs of the adopted person after the death of the adopted person and that adopted person's ancestors. Now, when identity of the biological parents is unknown and the adoptee is unable to...the adoptee is then able to file a form asking the adoption agency or the Health and Human Services System to help them in determining the identity of their parents. Now, if the identity of the biological...birth parents is not identifiable, LB 952 would make all adoption records available to the heirs of the adoptee after the adoptee's one-hundredth birthday. Currently, also, adoptive parents can sign a form to prevent their adopted child from performing any kind of a search that would determine their birth parents' identity. Being an adoptive parent myself,