

to hurt the Legislature, or the education system of this state to put into the curriculum of the schools that type of material which will tend to erase the psychological and emotional differences that are drawn between children who are called normal or ordinary, and those who are called special or handicapped? This piece of legislation, I feel, which is embodied in this amendment, will go a step in the direction of solving the tendency to view handicapped people, whether they are children or adults, as freaks or mutants who cause embarrassment and discomfort when they're present. These problems are not going to go away. We used to hide these people in closets. Now, we don't want to hide the idea of trying to solve the problem in a closet by failing to deal with it. I think this particular proposition is as essential as the present matter contained in LB 59, which aims at physical health of children. The emotional scars, the psychological trauma, that can settle upon a person who everytime he or she looks at himself or herself comes away with the idea that I'm not quite a human being. I see people's faces change when I come into the room, and I'm one who...I have no physical handicap in the sense of being crippled or deformed, I have another physical handicap based on my color. So I know...I know what it does to you in your mind. When you can see expressions, change, and conduct towards you determined by the way you look, in this case how can we turn our backs on the children when we can see that there are teachers even who don't know how to deal with these situations? There was a Charles Dickel at this conference and he's an Assistant Professor of Education at Creighton. He said parents of the handicapped go through stages similar to those experienced by the dying...denial, rage and finally acceptance. All parents must accept the fact that the child of their dreams and fantasies never was and never will be. Dickel said this acceptance comes sooner with the handicapped child. Now let me ask you this...oh, let the child of your mind die, let the real child live. There are joys in parenting an exceptional (handicapped) child. They are the same joys as in parenting a nonexceptional child. Now, there should not be a situation where merely because a child is handicapped a parent goes through the same trauma that a parent goes through in the case of the death of a child. That to me shows how serious this problem is. So I'm asking that you will adopt this amendment and it says that information on mental retardation and other developmental disabilities such as cerebral palsy, autism and epilepsy, their causes and the prevention thereof, will be a part of the educational system. I think the amendment is meritorious. I think it is necessary, and I believe, despite what Senator Murphy said in terms of a technical