

attention. But once it becomes evident that a child is being denied those things that he or she needs, then the state has an obligation to act in an appropriate fashion. To erect an absolute immunity in a law such as is being attempted in this amendment I think is wrong and inexcusable. My argument this morning has nothing to do with religion as such. It could be a Moslem asking for it, it could be an atheist asking for it but I'm going to look beyond what religious profession the parents make and think about the children. By coincidence one of the more gruesome set of pictures that we had shown to us during our hearings was of a child being treated by a practitioner. An autopsy was performed and instead of finding a spinal cord when they opened the child they found a gooey mess of yellow pus that had invaded the spinal cord, has invaded every cavity of the brain and the child had not been treated medically. Had there been no autopsy this would not have been discovered. Suppose the child has an infectious or contagious disease. There are a lot of reasons, there are a lot of reasons why Senator Nichol's amendment ought to be rejected, not because of an anti-religious slant or appeal, but because of the interest that society and the state have, and the right that they have to determine why citizens die. I'm opposed to his amendment.

PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes Senator Fowler.

SENATOR FOWLER: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, I was going to submit this amendment but I'm glad Senator Nichol did before I got to it. There are copies handed out and I would agree with both Senator DeCamp and Chambers and one of my reservations was that the amendment was overly broad in its language. I have visited with the people that are submitting it and they, as I understand their position, are not saying that if there are other mysterious circumstances associated with the death or other appearances of negligence or so on, that it cannot be investigated. I would suggest perhaps that we might be able to work out some language. Basically what their concern is that there not be a required autopsy if it appears for all...if for all intents and purposes a natural death with a Christian Science practitioner attending the individual. But perhaps we should not adopt this and try to work on some language that could be put on Select File. I do think that it may be overly broad, that it may exempt all of the other causes and I don't believe that is the intent but that was based on a short conversation. I think that they still believe that if there are the other list of mysterious circumstances that an autopsy would certainly be warranted. But perhaps the language is overly broad and perhaps there are other religions or pseudo religions or quasi religions that might claim under this that they would not have to fall under the law. So I think that it is an area worth investigation and