

April 2, 1981

LB 125

from the standpoint of rationality or logic, but I had to get those things said for the record. I genuinely am in favor of Senator Johnson's motion to return this bill, and I think it ought to be killed, because by killing it, no harm will be done to anybody. But if you don't kill it, there is an incalculable amount, an indeterminate amount of harm, that could be befall the citizens of the state who would be affected by the operation of this bill. And I hope you will think deeply on the issue.

SENATOR KAHLE: Your time is up, Senator Chambers.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: And vote for Senator Johnson's motion.

SENATOR KAHLE: There are no more lights, so, Senator Johnson, would you like to close on your motion?

SENATOR V. JOHNSON: Yes, I would, Mr. Speaker. I want my closing to be short because I do know that we are very conscious of our time. Senator Labeledz said in very short remarks that when I spoke I made no reference whatsoever to the rights of the unborn child. In the dialogue on abortion one of the things that has struck me over the years has been our use of language. It is interesting...I shouldn't say it is interesting, but when we use certain words, we pick with those words all the symbolism that comes with them. When, for example, the word "murder" is used, we clearly are connoting an illegal killing because that is the basic definition in our hearts of murder. On the other hand, if we use the word abortion as opposed to murder, we would be using a symbol that is not so value laden as is the word murder. When we speak of unborn child, our concept, I think, of child is a toddler, or the babe in arms, or the infant, and to use the word unborn child essentially emphasizes the concept of the child with the unborn being sort of a mere formality. Now a less value laden concept is the word fetus. If we use the word fetus we don't necessarily think of unborn child. But what am I even getting at? I don't mean to engage in sort of a metaphysical dialogue on the issue, but what I am saying simply is that we bring to this issue so many values and judgments and biases that it is difficult for us to really distinguish fact from fiction. Now I personally, I personally, respect the decision that the United States Supreme Court made in Rowe versus Wade, where in a sense the court began to carve out rights, so to speak, for a fetus, and what the court did was to provide some balancing tests, saying simply that during the first three