

May 14, 1981

LB 466

ceasing debate vote aye, opposed vote no. Record.

CLERK: 25 ayes, 0 nays to cease debate, Mr. President.

SPEAKER MARVEL: Debate is ceased. The Chair recognizes Senator Marsh to close on her amendment.

SENATOR MARSH: Senator Marvel and members of the Legislature, I would like to specifically respond to Senator Cullan's comments about the need to know why I feel a seventeen year old should be able to make that decision. Under Senator Labeledz' proposal, a woman of seventeen who is legally married in our state could make that decision. A young woman of seventeen can be legally married in this state. It seems to me that the same young woman who is not married at the same age should have the same right. You are understanding the young married woman of seventeen does not have to tell her parents or her husband. That young woman has the right to make that decision. I feel that the unmarried young woman of the same age of seventeen should have that right to make the decision. The ideal would be for the pregnancy not to happen but the next ideal would be for all the parents to become involved. If you do not know, you should become aware that there are times teenagers deliberately create a pregnancy to get back at parents with whom they are having difficulty. It is not reasonable as Senator Labeledz has tried to express that someone could go to court. Senator Vard Johnson explained to us about our court procedures in this state, if you were not already aware. I hope Senator Labeledz listened very carefully, but perhaps she was already aware as well. It is a reasonable compromise to use seventeen as the dividing age. Senator Cullan, we did raise the age of marriage in our state. Originally a young woman of sixteen could be married and that law was changed. In fact, it was changed fairly recently, and if I am not mistaken, you were here at the time it was changed. Several of us were involved in that change. We felt that seventeen was a better age for a woman to be making serious decisions relating to her own life and we, as a body, said to the citizens of Nebraska, we do not feel that a sixteen year old is mature enough for that type of responsibility. It seems to me that seventeen is a fair age given the condition of our current state laws. All of the young women who are sixteen or under the age of sixteen would come under the requirements of Senator Labeledz legislation. If you adopt my amendment, it would exclude those who are over the age, seventeen or older. We did make the distinction for young women of that age when it comes to marriage. I feel that this would be a reasonable compromise. It would help make her bill more livable. It would not have as many devastating effects as it currently does. What am I asking