

amendments, please?

SENATOR WESELY: Thank you, Mr. President, members, LB 231 is a piece of legislation by Senator Chizek. The committee did hear this legislation. It comes from the courts and also the Department of Health, but there were some needs for clarifying amendments. It was opposed by Kathy Moore of Voices for Children and also some concern was expressed by the Health Department about the medical history issue involved here. Now let me start back, last year Senator Conway passed legislation dealing with medical histories in adoptions and require that through the adoption process that we have a mandate for medical histories to be there so that we will, if somebody is adopted that there is medical history of their parents and families so if later on that adopted child has some medical difficulties they will have that medical history to refer back to, to help them with their medical problems. But one of the things that has come up in the situation is that there are some adoptions where there is a biological parent and a stepparent, they have remarried and the stepparent wants to adopt the biological child of their spouse. They don't think you necessarily need to have a medical history involved there, but what we found was that even in those cases you want a medical history in terms of not that child, because the one parent is there, but maybe for the other family members and so this bill would deal with the concerns expressed at the hearing in this regard and require that medical history but not just for the child. That would be exempted, but for the family it would continue. Then also the forms involved, we would allow the Department of Health the flexibility in the forms they would use on these medical histories. They have had some difficulty about some constrictions on that and that would ease up under this committee amendment. And then also the court, under the bill, would not necessarily have to have sent in the information to the Department of Health before they could grant an adoption, but this amendment would provide that the Health Department would still have the opportunity to go back to the court to get that document because that is where it should be filed but it doesn't, under the bill, have to necessarily be there before the adoption occurs. So it is very important that these committee amendments be adopted and I would ask for their adoption at this time, Mr. President.

PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator Conway, please.