

cases to see justice prevail in those cases. Now we did take some steps last year dealing with videotape testimony in depositions and we did see that some adjustment was made, a very difficult change, a very argued change, but nevertheless, we still have a serious problem. We still have many instances of young children that are sexually assaulted and not able to provide the corroboration necessary to bring conviction to these individuals and I think that's wrong. And now to take this step, as Senator Chambers says, and says for those that are older and provide for them the opportunity to proceed without corroboration but not for our younger members of our society, seems to me only to reemphasize how important it is to make the change that Senator Chambers and I are offering to you today. The situation about sexual assaults on our children and child abuse of our children is such that, a serious one had gotten to a point where we need even greater attention paid to it that I've also introduced another bill, LB 721, to remove from the county attorneys and give to the Attorney General the power to act in these cases. We're finding too often that the county attorneys of this state have not proceeded in protecting our children from different child abuse and sexual assault cases, that it is a difficult area, a very difficult one to bring convictions, and so we aren't seeing progress being made to the degree it should be to protect our children from these sorts of assaults. I think, clearly, a change is needed in terms of that area of who is responsible, moving forward, and part of the problem, part of the reason we're seeing this difficulty is this very statute we're discussing today, the need for corroboration and the difficulty it brings in bringing a successful prosecution to these individuals. I can see absolutely no reason, in my mind, why we should not adopt this amendment, proceed with the bill, tell the defense attorneys, yes, there was some agreement that you reached with some members and they valiantly fought the amendment, I'm sure they will and tell you that we can't do it this year but, for the rest of us that see this case clearly, I hope we will understand that we need to proceed to protect all our citizens, all of our citizens whether they are 14 or they are 10 or they are 40 or 50 years old. In any event, if they are sexually assaulted, we should give them the opportunity to bring justice to bear on those people that assaulted them, that we should not say that for a 10-year-old child that is sexually assaulted, that they have to meet a higher standard to prove the guilt of their attacker versus a 30 or 40-year-old. I just can't even understand that, so I would ask adoption of this amendment.