

confidentiality of patient identity and imposes certain duties on the EMS providers. We have done the amendment this way simply as a matter of convenience. In a nutshell, the EMS provider must request notification which is then provided to the physician designated by the provider within 48 hours. Only the fact of diagnosis is revealed, never the identity. Provisions are made in the bill for diagnostic testing. If there has been... a patient has the right to refuse the consent to testing. The bill is not a substitute in any way for positive action by the EMS provider. And I think it's important to emphasize that all health care facilities and providers are to adopt procedures addressing methods of preexposure safeguards and postexposure risk reduction. I would urge the body's adoption of the amendment. We passed out a summary of the bill and, as I said, I would urge the adoption.

PRESIDENT: Senator Wesely, did you wish to speak about the committee amendments?

SENATOR WESELY: Thank you. Mr. President and members, I would rise in support of the amendment and ask the body to adopt it and then I would also ask the body to advance the bill. I chaired the hearing on this legislation. If you look at LB 157, you will see a great number of individuals testified in support of it at the hearing. There were also a number of opponents to the bill. The opponents were very concerned about the original piece of legislation which was similar to a bill that Senator Chizek introduced last year. We did work toward compromise last year and did advance a bill at the end of the session. We went back to work once again and further compromised in trying to arrive at a consensus on this issue. Where we're at, essentially, is that the original bill that's before us, without the amendment, would be intrusive of personal confidentiality and I would object and I think the Health and Human Services Committee would object to it. But recognizing the integrity and honesty of Senator Chizek, we knew that he would come back with this amendment and work out the differences of different individuals. The different parties involved, the medical association and the hospital association, I understand, are agreed to this amendment. I am not yet certain of other potentially interested parties and I don't know if everybody has really had a chance to review the language in detail. I, personally, haven't but I think the thrust of it is fine. I think the intent is good and we're certainly better off with this amendment than the original bill. Currently, Senator