

open for seven or eight years. Remember, the policy of the juvenile court is to keep families together, and in many cases, we are not dealing with the ideal family. We are dealing with troubled families, victimized families, child abuse cases, very, very difficult situation. I have got a case now that I have been handling for I think almost six and a half years and finally the court has been able, through the work of various individuals, to put a child and that child's mother together again permanently after six years. The juvenile court system works, in my opinion, in Douglas County but the manpower needs are extremely significant. The juvenile court in Douglas County had an associate court judge for the 10-year period between 1975 through 1985, and, in 1985, the Legislature repealed the authorization for an associate court judge for Douglas County and that was Judge Mullen, who is now on the district court bench in Douglas County, but it was just one year later, in 1986, it was one year later in 1986 when the Supreme Court decided that, yes, it was necessary for an additional judge to be added, so since 1986 Judge Caniglia has handled that particular job. This is the only place we can come to solve this problem. If there was another solution to the juvenile court problem, maybe we could address it at that point, but this is really the only...at this point after all of these years and all of the statistics, the only reasonable solution is the addition of, in this case, another about one-half of a judge to give Douglas County three judges and Lancaster County two judges. It would be incongruous for Lancaster County, a much smaller population base, to have two separate juvenile court justices, and Douglas County have only two as well. There is also a good point to be made that we need continuity, and a temporary, albeit a very excellent temporary judge in Judge Caniglia, is not the proper way to handle juvenile court matters which are, in many cases, the most difficult matters that come before the court system in Nebraska. I appreciate Senator Chizek's support. I notice that he is not here but I appreciate his support for this amendment, and I appreciate the other members of the Judiciary Committee who advanced this bill to the floor. This is the third year in a row that we have dealt with the juvenile court judge problem in Douglas County and I urge the members to adopt this amendment onto LB 147 at this time, and then advance LB 147 on to Select File. Thank you.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Thank you. Discussion on the amendment.
Senator Abboud.