

will do is make sure that in the domestic violence area where children are abused, where women are abused, and it's the fastest growing crime that we have in this state, of domestic violence, we will make sure that there is no misunderstanding in domestic violence cases. They can, if we pass the Pirsch amendment, they can arrest. Even if they can't show that there was a felony, if they can't show a misdemeanor had occurred, they can, if they feel there is a threatening situation to those people present, they can make an arrest. Now please understand, I agree with Senator Chambers that I get very, very uneasy about giving way too broad of powers to law enforcement officials. The particular rights of human beings sometimes are at a very critical balance when we do such things. I do not normally stand up and say let's give more authority to police officials. I'm very wary of that, but I'm also, as Senator Chambers is as well, extremely, extremely concerned on domestic violence cases and we know studies show that in states where they have clearly defined and clearly understood what they can do in domestic violence cases, that when arrests have been made, domestic violence continuing in that same household with the same people involved has declined, has declined. And I will state that again. When law enforcement officials are comfortable in the domestic violence statutes that they can make arrests because of potential threats, which is what Senator Chambers wants to remove, when they make the arrests in those cases, domestic violence has declined in repetitive natures and that's important. And, yes, maybe there are some other statutes out there that clarify over there, but over here in domestic violence it's not so, and maybe we don't have all Rhodes scholars out there in the police force that can interpret, that can make interpretations of the entire constitutions of all our legal codes and precisely know what they can do. Maybe we don't have all those people, but we have good, dedicated people, for the most part, who are telling me that they would like some clarification here so they can do what is necessary to reduce domestic violence. I would hope at this point that we would not agree to the Chambers amendment which would delete in essence, line 3 of page 2 of the amendment, though I...

SPEAKER BARRETT: One minute.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: ...understand his concern. I deeply understand his concern, but I also understand that in so many cases the police officers are at difficulty in making the arrest because of the interpretation of the present law. Thank you,