

SENATOR ASHFORD: Okay, thank you. I'm going to be very brief, Mr. President. I just would like to follow up a little bit with what I had mentioned earlier. When I started running for office I remember one of the first things I did was talk to Father Mainelli, who is now the Pastor at the Cathedral, and Rabbi Brooks and I think it was Pastor Schoonover from the Lutheran Church that I attend, and talked about the issue of abortion. And each one of them had different viewpoints and they are very moral men but they, basically, said to me that in its essence, in its essence, the issue of abortion is clearly a moral question which each individual must answer for herself and it is an issue that...or a decision which should only be made after a considerable amount of thought and discussion. I guess what offends me the most about this bill, and at the beginning I had some, as Senator Labeledz knows, I had some sympathies for the bill, but where...where I was lost and what lost me, I guess, and it's...the other amendments, I'm sure there will be more amendments, I'm not going to offer any more on General File, I may on Select, but where I...what lost me was the decision of this body to reject the Lynch amendment because, in its essence, we are asking...well, first of all, in its essence we are intervening...the government of the State of Nebraska is intervening in an extremely private decision in a very, very real way. Already, an individual who chooses an abortion which is a legal act must go through a considerable amount of questioning and when she goes to an abortion clinic or a clinic in Omaha or in Lincoln, confronts a great deal of abuse in walking into the clinic itself. So that person has gone through a lot, as it is. And with the Lynch amendment, at the very least, I felt we had...we were starting in the right direction, different possibly from other states in adopting a humane policy of notification. And with some of the other amendments, the one parent amendment, and some amendments that I believe...or an amendment that Senator Lindsay and I have worked out, we at least were getting somewhere towards a humane policy. If we were going to notify individuals' parents, then we would be doing it in a humane way and in as humane a way as possible. But I think with the rejection of the Lynch amendment, in my case, we basically threw the...threw it out the window. And we can talk all night about whether we oppose abortion or don't oppose abortion or whether we feel that government should intervene or not intervene but when we, as a body, decide that we are not going to tell this young girl what her rights are, to me, is so ironic as we sit here and say, well, we don't want to