

care to speak to the suspension? Senator Bernard-Stevens, please, would you care to speak? Thank you. Senator Schmit, on the suspension.

SENATOR SCHMIT: Mr. President and members, I rise in support of the motion to suspend the rules and I would just like to comment a little relative to the concern of my seatmate and good friend, Senator Moore, relative to the failure of this body to pass a cloture rule. I did not vote in support of the rule of cloture and I do not believe that it is necessary although it is very tempting. I recognize that on this floor from time to time we all become frustrated. As we approach the end of the session, that frustration, of course, increases. But nonetheless the willingness and the ability to express ourselves freely and to use the rules is important, I believe, to this body. Each of us has the capacity to do that which we think necessary to defend our own position. Some of use it more than others and that is also our right insofar as we see it. I suggest that we ought to suspend the rules. That, in effect, is its own cloture provision. I believe that the bill that has been debated here which is, of course, highly contested deserves a vote. Senator Labeledz has, of course, and she has outlined again and again a number of supporters on this bill who from time to time have become concerned because of the amount of time that the bill has taken. I, very frankly, could not agree more heartily with anyone than I could with Senator Pirsch who says this is a most important bill. This is a bill which, in my opinion, is more important than probably any of the other bills on the floor from the standpoint of those individuals who have the least ability to protect themselves of any of our constituents and that is the unborn child. We will pass the budget bills inevitably. No other bill, as far as I'm concerned, needs to be passed as much as does this bill. I recognize the deep feelings on both sides and I do not challenge the convictions of those who disagree with me. At the same time, I believe that we have a right, those of us who feel as I do and Senator Labeledz and others feel, to have a vote on this bill. It has been indicated that if we come back at the start of the session, we will have no time limitations or no time constraints. Well, let me say this, that this bill can take the entire next session also. No reason, no guarantees, no other kind of compromises have been agreed upon. Therefore, you are now at the position where if you vote to suspend the rules, you may advance the bill to Select File, then it's back to the ball game. But it would be a mistake, I think, at this time not to suspend the rules and give Senator Labeledz