

have asked to put amendments on this bill. The ones we have debated so far have been debated fully. People have had an opportunity to speak and they have been voted upon. When this proposal was made to allow this substitution of this amendment for the amendment that had already been proposed, Senator Labeledz was courteous and did not object to it. When a division of the question occurred, I suppose any of us could have objected at that time. I thought the division would be...maybe it would be divided into two amendments. I think there was a courtesy extended to Senator Bernard-Stevens to feeling that maybe it would be divided and maybe it was appropriate. By my count, that division took 19 separate amendments. There will be 19 separate amendments if this division of the question is allowed. Each of those 19 separate amendments will have a 10-minute opening, five-minute closing, debate in between. We will be here a long and extended time if all of those are considered. We have other important issues to discuss. Abortion is certainly an important issue to discuss. It's not a trivial issue at all, it's a great moral issue of our time. But we also have property taxes to consider. We have a drug abuse problem to consider. We have income and sales tax, school refinancing, nuclear waste issues to consider. There are other important issues that need to come before this Legislature in this 60-day session. Allowing this kind of procedure to occur will restrict the amount of time we have to debate on other important issues as well. It seems to me, out of respect for Senator Labeledz and respect for this body, that it would be appropriate for Senator Bernard-Stevens to consider withdrawing his division of the question. Let people vote on this particular amendment. For all we know, this amendment may be approved in total or it may be disapproved in total. Then it would seem to me there would be the option, at that time, to come back on Select File and if it was not approved, to select certain sections that Senator Bernard-Stevens deems important, put them as amendments on Select File. He would have another opportunity to do that. I think that would be the courteous thing to do. I think that would be the respectful thing to do, is withdraw his division of the question request, allow this amendment to be considered in its entirety, let people debate and discuss it and vote it one way or another. I don't think that we should allow the rules to be manipulated in this fashion. There is something to be said about comporting with the letter of the rules and violating the spirit of the rules. It seems to me, while Senator Bernard-Stevens may be, in fact, consistent with the rules if you interpret them literally, I