

at-risk children in many different ways and I think Nebraska is...it's time for us to develop a program that will really be meaningful in this area. Finally, I think one of the parts of the bill...of the program that's of great interest to me is that it stresses the family. Can I have a gavel, Madam Chairman?

SENATOR LABEDZ PRESIDING

SENATOR LABEDZ: (Gavel.) I'm sorry, Senator Ashford, requested that we have some attention. There is too much confusion on the floor.

SENATOR ASHFORD: I can't think with all that going on, as you all know, of course.

SENATOR LABEDZ: Senator Ashford, I have the same problem when I'm at the microphone, so don't worry.

SENATOR ASHFORD: Thank you, Madam President. My point really is that what is important to me about this bill is that it stresses programs that educate the family and help bring families together. It's really again, I think, the essence also of why we're here and that is to make for stronger families and stronger family ties and institutions that enhance that is important.

SENATOR LABEDZ: One minute, Senator Ashford.

SENATOR ASHFORD: So, with that, I would certainly urge that we follow Senator Withem's lead here and advance LB 567 to Select File. Thank you.

SENATOR LABEDZ: Thank you, Senator Ashford. Senator Wesely, on the advancement of LB 567.

SENATOR WESELY: Thank you, Madam President, members of the Legislature, I am a co-sponsor of the bill along with Senator Ashford, Senator Bernard-Steven and Senator Withem and want to thank everybody that's worked on this and especially point out that Senator LaVon Crosby served as a liaison between the Education Committee and the Health and Human Services Committee this last interim in looking at this issue and we did have a function up at Omaha where we had a great number of business leaders come to discuss this bill and this concept. And what we're finding is the issue of children and early childhood