

Legislature has done very good things for children this session and has in the past as well and very much look forward to seeing this body advance this legislation today.

PRESIDENT NICHOL PRESIDING

PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator Crosby, please, followed by Senator Withem and Senator Beck.

SENATOR CROSBY: Thank you, Mr. President, and members, it's a real pleasure to speak on this bill this morning. And I was...I had to smile a little bit when Brad Ashford couldn't talk with everybody else talking because, see, if he was a mother, he would have no problem. The average mother can talk, cook, nurse the baby and kiss her husband as he comes through the door, all at one time. It works, let me tell you. I have passed around the Erma Bombeck column and one of the...and it's a very clever column. And I always speak from the point of view of the woman because this is what falls to us quite often is early childhood education and childhood education all the way through. One of the things I love in her column, if you haven't read it, is this paragraph. "Mothers who work outside of the home probably are the most misunderstood women in the world. All you have to do is to leaf through the rash of magazines designed to target their problems." Do I really need to know it's time to move away from big boards and start trading over the counter, or share my recipes with the great chefs of the world? No, that's not what it's all about and I think that she points out a lot of things in her usual written style that most of us can relate to. One of the things I want to say this morning is that the task force, headed by Pam Brown, worked very hard all year to bring this idea together and get the legislation together. And it is extremely important, one of the points that came out to me, very quickly, as Senator Ron Withem mentioned, is that the Head Start Program already has a track record. And, of course, that was geared to disadvantaged and minorities. But one of...here's three statistics that I would like to read to you. Twenty years later after the Head Start Program was begun, the children who had been involved in that program, a significant percentage had not dropped out of school. They went on to some form of higher education and they were not in jail. Those are really good statistics. So the need and the idea of it is...has already been proven. Some school districts in Nebraska already have day care centers for various reasons and this is what we're talking about. Day care, in the nineties, is a given. We cannot ignore