

SPEAKER BARRETT: One minute.

SENATOR WESELY: ...to step in and deal with that problem, to supersede the failures of the county attorney system that we may have left after we make the changes proposed in this bill. And so we have a check and balance. We have the ability of the county attorney to intercede but, if they do not, we have the ability of the Attorney General to step in. And I think that is absolutely necessary. I passed out for you also figures, once again, on child abuse and neglect. This bill goes beyond child abuse and neglect and deals with other matters, as well, crimes against children. But, if you look at that again, it's a horrible thought to think that there are over 7,000 cases investigated of child abuse and neglect, and you know that there are many more cases, because not every one of them is brought to the attention of authorities. But 7,500 cases investigated, over 4,000 substantiated, over 7,000 or right around 7,000 children involved with abuse in this state on a yearly basis, every year 7,000 children abused in Nebraska, we've got to stop that.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Time.

SENATOR WESELY: This bill will help.

SPEAKER BARRETT: Senator Pirsch, please, followed by Senators McFarland and Labedz.

SENATOR PIRSCH: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and colleagues. The Judiciary Committee did look long and hard. And uppermost in their mind was the acknowledgement that what we do here will be for children victims of the state, not just necessarily the Franklin victims. And Senator Schmit gave me credit for Jenny Robak's bill, which I did co-sponsor, which did away with corroboration, which we've tried to do for years. But you know the courts did away with it first. We were the last state to do that, the last state to accept that, that witnesses or that victims didn't particularly need another witness, particularly in those kinds of circumstances. But the courts had recognized that first. And often I've been frustrated at the slowness, sometimes, of this body to acknowledge that victims, and particularly children victims, do need attention. Franklin has brought some realities to light. These are not new serious crimes which have suddenly been discovered in Nebraska. These