

which through the use of the suspension motions will be denied us as far as the prospect for change and so, in fact, it is a chance to talk about the issue of parental notification which is coming up on this bill. There was some excellent testimony which is, I think, revealing of one of the reasons, one of the most heartfelt reasons that I personally have which would permit me do the dastardly deeds that Senator Lindsay was complaining of. Dr. Anne Coyne testified before our Judiciary Committee. She said, I'm a professor of social work at UN-O, I'm a child welfare specialist, I'm a practicing Catholic, I oppose abortion, I also oppose LB 769 because it has the potential to harm vulnerable teenagers and their families. I assume and have people who have stated the intent in proposing this legislation is to strengthen families and to provide emotional support to pregnant teens facing problem pregnancies. I do not believe that this legislation will achieve those goals, and in addition, I believe it will do considerable harm to pregnant teenagers from dysfunctional families. While studies show that most teenagers do notify their parents when they become pregnant, there are about 20 to 25 percent who do not do so for very good reasons. These youngsters live in families where one or both parents are mentally ill, chemically dependent, abusive in some way. These youngsters know that even minor upsets can trigger violent uncontrolled abusive behaviors in parents and, therefore, they know that news of their pregnancy which is not a minor issue is very apt to bring on violent behavior towards themselves or others in their family. Studies have shown that the incidents of physical abuse increases during pregnancy not only for teens, but for adult women as well. Therefore, teens living in abusive families are apt to be at high risk for abuse when their pregnancy becomes known. Additionally, a not insignificant number of teenage pregnancies are the result of incest, especially incest by stepfathers. Notification to the parents of a daughter's pregnancy may be the first indication that incest is occurring. The potential for violence by the biological father against the perpetrator...

SPEAKER BARRETT: One minute.

SENATOR LANDIS: ...or against the mother for that matter, allow it to happen, who allow it to happen supposedly, is quite high. Also the risk of violence against the girl by all other members of the family is high if she is seen as the cause of a family breakup. The occurrence of sexual abuse in the Midwest is not rare. In a research study done last fall by one of the major