

are no areas where we can work together. Once the child is born, whether it's through Caesarean section, premature birth or coming completely to term, once a child is in the world that can live independent of its mother, I say that a child exists for every purpose, and we ought to have concern for the welfare of that child. I believe that once conception occurs, there is within the woman's body a potential for human life. That which exists in her is living in the sense of being able to carry out all of the functions of living cells and organisms. The cells divide, they differentiate and various organs and systems will ultimately form. But until that has been achieved, I don't think what is in the woman is a full-fledged human being. There, obviously, is living material, just as the substance of my kidneys and my heart and lungs are living material, but they are not independent beings. They don't even have the potential, as far as I know, to become independent beings. But if this and other Legislatures could show a compassionate and genuine concern for all living beings from the time of birth till the time of death, then we would have our hands so full that we wouldn't spend an entire or a large portion of the legislative session arguing about which there is no definitive answer, where we all express our opinions, some more vociferously than others. But after all of the opinions have been expressed, no minds are changed, no positions are altered, no hard lines have softened. The battle will continue to rage every time the issue is raised. So if we could use good judgment, spend our time and the resources of the state helping those we have an obligation to help and those on whom we can agree about needing help, we would be much further down the line. I cannot fault people from the standpoint of their moral or religious convictions for saying that a full-fledged human being exists as soon as the zygote comes into being, the fertilized egg. But I do find fault when there is an attempt to impose their belief that that's a full-fledged human being with all attendant consequences on everybody who may not so believe, whose circumstances may be such that they may need to obtain an abortion...

SPEAKER BARRETT: One minute.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: ...and because of those philosophical, ethical or moral views they are prevented, because of somebody else's opinion and philosophy of life, from doing that which they feel is absolutely essential to their own well being. When I get letters from young people about my view on abortion, I don't go into all the things I'm saying now. I tell them that