

PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator Bernard-Stevens, followed by Senator Schmit.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Thank you, Mr. President, members of the body, I wanted to pick up a little bit on a topic that I broached on earlier that Senator Landis talked about as well and that is the frustration that everyone has had on both sides. I understand the frustration of a group when you have the votes to do something and you're unable to do that which you want to do. I experienced it, though briefly, not nearly as much as others have but on helping Senator Pirsch the other day on her bill, LB 976, and the frustration not being able to move, but I understand that was the system, but I also understand the frustration. There's frustration on the other side as well, the frustration of having a bill and not being able to amend it, and I don't mean not having the votes to amend it, but a mentality there that we're simply not going to allow you to amend it. You can offer whatever amendments you want, we're just not going to agree to them no matter what the scenario, and that's very frustrating. And I kind of want to put a couple things also on the record because I'm afraid at some point they're going to get lost and they probably will anyway even if it is on the record, and that is what we tend to forget just a little bit as a body is how the system works, and the system has worked very, very well. It's very frustrating to have a very vocal and strong minority slow and sometimes stop the majority if they feel the majority is wrong, but the system, for example, last year on LB 769 worked very, very well. This same majority was offering motions and amendments and causing their traditional havoc of destruction I guess on the bill, but yet in the course of the session last year, twice, not once, but twice LB 769 came up for an actual vote on the suspension of rules, to cease debate, no further amendments and we would have voted on the bill. We came to that point twice and the proponents, for whatever reasons and I'm sure all of them were legitimate, simply did not have the votes either time. They did not have the 30 votes twice to get the bill that they're still trying to get now. And yet they're saying we'd like to have just a straight up and down vote, we'd just like to suspend the rules, we've got the votes. Well, they didn't have the votes then, twice. Then we had a long interim. We came back this session and the bill was on General File. It was going to be one of those first discussed and I know everyone was anticipating what was going to happen on the bill. And what threw everything in a tizzy was the way things unfolded, and I