

SENATOR SCHIMEK: Mr. President and members of the body, I guess I am somewhat frustrated myself, Senator Crosby, because those of us who feel that we cannot support LB 425, as written, are being accused of not wanting parents to communicate with their children. That is absolutely the furthest thing from my mind, and I am sure from some of the others who have problems with this bill. We are not talking about a bill here that says...I mean we are not voting on a bill that says the state can't, or the state says families can't communicate. What we are talking about here, in my mind anyway, are a very small group of young women. I would like to thank Senator Rasmussen and Senator Hillman for bringing the amendment that they have brought to us. In the discussion of the notification bill last year, I said publicly, both in writing and on the floor, that I could support a notification bill, if we could inject a third party other than the courts into this scenario. To me it is very disconcerting to think about that young girl out there who has to go to the courts because she is too frightened and too much in danger to go to her family. If we could do something like the Rasmussen-Hillman amendment and have another third party, a trusted counselor or clergy, to me that makes a lot of sense. You remember that this is probably the most, as Senator Lindsay said, gut-wrenching experience of this young woman's life, and we don't need to punish her. We need to find help for this young woman. Proponents of parental notification repeatedly talk about parental rights, virtually ignoring the rights of these young women. Now parents have rights but so do minors. In fact, the right of a minor to choose abortion is a constitutional right. In none of its decisions regarding parental involvement has the U.S. Supreme Court ever said that parents have a constitutional right to know of their daughter's abortion. We have repeatedly heard that minors can't get their ears pierced without parental consent, or be given an aspirin, or measles shot. What is left out of these statements is that the state does not require parental consent or notification for any of these things, it is the providers of services and treatments that require the consent of parents, and concern about liability appears to be the rationale, Senator Labeledz, probably for those field trips. I imagine that liability is part of that rationale, not an altruistic, moral, or philosophical position regarding parental involvement. To equate pierced ears, measles shot, and aspirin consumption to an abortion is to simplify the issue. Getting one's ears pierced is not a constitutional right, abortion is. And until the