

I am aware I guess and have practiced in the courts for 15 years and I realize that there are limitations on how the courts, first of all, the court system is not set up, and I think this point has been brought up a couple of times in this debate by Senator Rasmussen earlier on and others, that the court system is not designed to deal with abortion and also, even though the standard to be adopted by a court is to determine whether or not a young woman is competent to make a decision, obviously, the biases and the...of the individual judges would enter into that determination, and but more than that, the real concern that I have is not that a judge would not make a decision as to competency adequately as in Minnesota where the vast, I think 95 percent or whatever the number is, of judges that have been faced with the judicial bypass application have granted the applications. My concern is and always I think that where I really fall down on this issue is that of privacy, that I am not convinced or satisfied that a young woman should be thrust into that public arena in this stage in her life. I think it's cruel in many respects that that happens. And, therefore, I have tried to look at alternatives to the judicial bypass that will maintain communication and also ensure privacy. Privacy or the right to privacy is, in my opinion, a very fundamental right, one that I hold quite dear, one that I believe is protected by the Constitution of the United States and I, therefore, strongly supported Senator Hillman and Senator Rasmussen in their amendment because I think, at least since I've been here, it's five years, they really did, I think, encapsulate some very well-thought-out opinions and views on how this should be dealt with and I appreciate the amendment. Senator Landis's amendment...

SPEAKER BAACK: One minute.

SENATOR ASHFORD: ...gets at the same point and that is offering, trying to find or identify individuals who can offer comfort and support and advice to a young woman who is faced with this dilemma that she would be faced with it and I think, and I support it, I think it does a lot towards getting at the issue. It is in the spirit of Senator Rasmussen and Senator Hillman's amendment. It's common sense. I think it's compassionate and I, wholeheartedly, endorse it for those reasons. Thank you.

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Ashford. Next speaker is Senator Lindsay.