

death, then he can act. And my amendment would simply add health risks to this exemption and the wording would read, then in the bill, the attending physician certified in writing in the pregnant woman's medical record that continuation of the pregnancy provides an immediate threat or grave risk to the life or health of the pregnant minor. And reasons for this change, there is an identical exemption to the existing, in the existing parental notification statute the Legislature passed in 1981. Supporters of the original bill apparently felt that this was an important item to include. Secondly, it would allow physicians more latitude in protecting the health of their patients and it does make good sense, I think, to allow the physician to act when there is an emergency. There could be a situation where a minor is gravely ill and the doctor determines that she could be irreparably harmed if the abortion is delayed. Last year this body did reject a similar, if not identical, amendment proposed by Senator Chambers. Opponents argued that health is an extremely broad term and could include mental health, emotional health and physical well-being. I maintain that mental and emotional health and physical well-being should not be discounted and treated lightly. They are extremely important and can indeed be life threatening. What if a physician determines that a minor's poor mental or emotional health is such that if forced to notify a parent or go to court she might seek an illegal abortion, self-induced abortion, or commit suicide. One cannot get more life threatening than that. Not to allow an exemption to notification if a minor's health be it physical, emotional or mental could only exacerbate her problem and create additional harm. I don't think any of us in here are trained and practicing physicians. We have no medical training and shouldn't presume to second guess a physician who may determine that a minor's health whether it be physical, mental, or emotional would be endangered if the abortionist delayed. With that I would simply ask that you support this amendment. Thank you very much.

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Schimek. Before we proceed to the next speaker I would like to introduce some guests of Senator Wesely. We have 45 sixth graders and their teacher from the Brownell Elementary here in Lincoln. Would you folks please stand and be welcomed by the Legislature. Thank you for being with us. Senator Chambers, on the Schimek amendment.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Mr. Speaker and members of the Legislature, I strongly support this amendment and I'd like to ask Senator