

the three to seven?

CLERK: Yes, sir.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Okay. Members of the body, one of the things I will be talking about much later in detail on General File and/or on Select File will be the judicial bypass and some of the difficulties that we have still within the bill. This is one, I feel, that the body can go along with and will be able to support. This amendment basically says that when the petition is filed by the minor, the way the bill reads now is that the court must act in three days. And I understand the reasoning, naturally, for why the court needs to act quickly on these cases. What I'm bringing to the body is a concern I have in talking to and receiving input from judges at the county, district and juvenile level about their concern, particularly in western Nebraska and rural Nebraska, where there are counties where judges do not even enter the county for periods of two to three or four weeks. And what they're...the input that judges were giving me is that if we're going to pass a system of a judicial bypass, let's pass one that was...that is at least a little bit more workable for rural Nebraska so as if you have only two judges or three that you can choose from and they're all tied up in a hearing at that particular time, that if you give a time period between three and seven days, they feel they would be able to make a decision and be able to go to the county specifically to hear that particular case that we put before them in a seven-day period. Many of the judges in both eastern and western part of the state's input was that they felt it would...there would be times when it would be very, very difficult because of location for the judge to pick up where they are, possibly in a jury trial, go clear out to someplace in the far extremes of their judicial district to hear a particular case. In fact, well, some of the judges were afraid that if they had to pull out of a jury trial and go hear the case immediately in a three-day period, that they might even be jeopardizing that particular case and giving the defense attorney grounds for filing a mistrial because the jury is able to go home and what have you. So this amendment would simply change the amount of days from three to seven and it would state that the decision needs to be made within seven days. So if they could make it in three days, or two days, or one day, that's fine, but it would give a little more latitude in the rural areas where we don't have the luxury, as we do in the eastern part of the state, of having judges here all the time.