

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Rasmussen. Senator Bernard-Stevens, did you wish to discuss your amendment further?

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Thank you, members of the body. I guess I have really been somewhat surprised on the discussion. And Senator Lindsay and I have been trying to get together and talk quite quickly on the issue and quietly on the issue but so many people have asked Senator Lindsay some questions it's been difficult to do so. So I'm going to make remarks to the body but also toward Senator Lindsay and to see if we can...if we can come down to some understanding of what I'm really trying to do. And, again, as has been indicative, I think, with the debate on a whole, the body has worked very well together. We've move through the amendments. We've discussed things. We've then gotten to a vote and we've moved on and this is a continuation of that. It certainly is no purpose of mine to stall or delay. One of the things I did during the last couple months, and I don't think it's a surprise to too many people as word began filtering out here and there, I began looking at the judicial bypass system and asking myself, personally, some real good questions. For example, all right, if it does pass, would the system work in Nebraska? I had one side, the pro-choice, saying, Dave, it's not going to work, it's full of holes, it's not working elsewhere. And I had another side, the pro-life side, saying, it is workable, it is in other states and it is working in other states. So I, basically, said this is nuts. How do I make a decision when I'm getting absolutely contrary information. So I drafted a letter and I sent it to every judge in the State of Nebraska, with the exception of the Supreme Court who I assumed wouldn't respond anyway. And at that particular point...they're too busy, that's right. One of the things that was surprising to me was, number one, the number of responses that I got. And, of course, individually I promised that I would keep them confidential and I have and I will continue. In fact, I have even thrown the letters away so that there is no even hint of where individually the responses came from. But one of the things I was pleased on was the number of responses I got from judges, from the county, district and juvenile areas clear across the state. And one of the things that they all did, and I have a copy of...I've compiled all of their basic statements into a document I was going to hand out later but part of it serves my purpose here. Members of the body, this is what the judges are telling you about the bypass system within the three-day period. This is not Bernard-Stevens making up information, this is coming directly from those who