

foolish to make girls go through that system for whatever reason or satisfaction it gives some people to make them go through it. One of the things that troubles me the most about this conversation is this undercurrent, this attitude that girls who get pregnant before they are married should be punished, in fact, the pregnancy is just dues for fooling around before she gets married. It is interesting to me that those of you believe that conception represents life, when a young girl decides to protect what you perceive to be a life, that you don't say thank you for her courage, for her morality. That isn't what we do in our society. When a teenage girl gets pregnant the first thing we do is kick out of school. We fire her from her job, we force her onto welfare, we segregate and isolate her as if she has got the most worst contagious, awful, social disease there ever was and now we're going to go one step further and force her into the court system to be judged. In spite of the fact that we know that most 18 and 19-year-olds are deemed by the judge to be mature enough to make that decision by themselves. Recently I heard about a case of a young girl, teenage girl who got pregnant and she decided that what she was carrying did represent life and she did give that child an opportunity to live as some of you would define the situation. And after she had that baby she called the convent and told the sisters, I'm leaving my baby on your stairs because I think you can do a better job of raising this child than I can. So did we say "hallelujah" for this girl's morality? Did we say how wonderful that she was so courageous? No, that isn't what we did. We put a warrant out for her arrest for child abandonment. This bill is just one more step in the perpetuation of the belief that we're supposed to punish young girls who get pregnant. I hear people who support this bill talk about how we're doing this out of love and care for the young girl who gets pregnant before she is married and yet no one has been able to show me how that is going to happen. I urge you to support the amendment so that at least those 18 and 19-year-olds who for the most part are deemed mature by the judges to make this decision on their own can do so.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Rasmussen. Senator Labeledz.

SENATOR LABEDZ: Thank you, Madam President. I remember hearing prior today, to today, and today also by Senator Chambers and Senator Landis they keep mentioning the fact that it is age 19, but LB 425 reads pregnant woman shall mean an unemancipated woman under 19 years of age who is pregnant or a pregnant woman