

SENATOR LANDIS: Madam President, our discussion of the issue got a little far afield although it was very illuminating on the merits and demerits of LB 425, but let's return just to the amendment before us right now. Currently LB 425 applies to minor women under the age of 19. If this amendment is adopted it will apply to minor women under the age of 18. It's a substitution of the word "eighteen" for "nineteen" and this is an age which every piece of information tells us that were the young woman to go to the judicial bypass system the court would rule that she was mature enough to make this decision on her own. It's really a pro forma obligation and yet none...not one without a great deal of coercion because as we all know, going to court and facing a judge would be a difficult and traumatic situation, but where 18 year olds do this, the courts uniformly rule that they are mature enough. So all we've really done is either putting them in the situation of addressing the trauma and going to the court to get their ruling or complying with the act, when, in fact, the act is not aimed at them, the act is aimed at immature women who can't make this decision on their own and who need the assistance of some kind of an adult assistant and advisor. I want to point out to the group that if this amendment is not adopted we will have this strange kind of public policy that says, an 18-year-old woman may decide who the president of the United States is, who the governor of this state is, who their state senator can be, but who cannot make this decision on their own. They are sufficiently of age and maturity to decide our national, state and local leadership but are not capable of running their own lives sufficiently to make a decision as to what a constitutionally and acceptable and legal medical procedure they may involve themselves in. That, of course, confounds my perspective and it's the reason why judges when faced with this allow young women to proceed. By leaving the age that you have in the bill now you really are simply increasing the coercive factor of the bill. You're really just simply trying to create enough difficulty, obstacle and trauma in the face of the young woman to achieve the philosophical goal which a majority of the co-sponsors have and that is simply that abortion is wrong and it needs to be avoided at all costs including the cost of making young women face abusive situations if need be. I ask you to separate the goal that is enunciated from 425 from its impact, to recognize the realities that 18-year-old women who are on their own, who are capable of voting for their governorship, or their state senator should not be put through the coercive problem of the judicial