

problem with the way we give the children to the foster parents, or the way that the money is handled, and I don't mean it in a dishonest way, when I say that. It is just that some way or another we are not getting the best return for that foster care dollar as we should be, and the biggest thing we are not getting is protection, loving care, and the privilege to grow up as a real person for these foster children. So for that reason, aside from all the other things, David, I will vote against this amendment at this time. But since the bill is out and it will come eventually, perhaps it can be incorporated with a lot of other things that I think need to be done in the foster care field. Thank you.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Crosby. Before we proceed with debate, I'd like to direct the senators' attention to the south balcony. Guests today of Senator Abboud are 60 fourth graders from Hitchcock in Omaha, Nebraska, with their teachers. Would you please rise and be recognized. Welcome to the Legislative Chambers. Thank you. Now I will recognized Senator Wesely, followed by Senator Bernard-Stevens and Morrissey. Senator Wesely.

SENATOR WESELY: Just real briefly. Madam President, I would rise in support of the Bernard-Stevens amendment. We did hear in the Health and Human Services Committee LB 169 and it did advance 5-0. It does attempt to address an important problem that we have with foster parents, providing them with liability coverage. We have a problem with foster care in this state. We have an inadequate supply of foster parents. We should realize that some incentive has to be placed in this field, and this particular idea had a lot of merit. I also understand that Senator Bernard-Stevens is retaining the \$50 deductible that the committee deleted from his bill, and that makes it more palatable, I am sure, to some people. I also believe that the broad authority and power of the Department of Social Services Department will allow them to implement this provision without specific statutory authorization. I believe that they have very broad authority in this area and, perhaps, I would still want to proceed with the other bill to make it clear that they should do so, but I think this appropriation would not have a difficulty, I would think, with the department implementing it. And, again, we saw the articles by Flannery in the World-Herald, and a number of issues of concern about foster care, about child care, child abuse. This is one small step forward but an important one. I would support the amendment.