

We are accepting call-in votes on the committee amendments.

CLERK: Senator Robinson voting yes. Senator Lamb voting yes. Senator Moore voting yes. Senator Kristensen voting yes. Senator Beyer voting yes. Senator Elmer voting yes.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Please record, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: 29 ayes, 0 nays to adopt committee amendments, Madam President.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Committee amendments are adopted. I will raise the call and I'll recognize Senator Withem for opening on the bill itself.

SENATOR WITHEM: Yes, Madam President and members of the body, I believe Senator Wesely, Senator Labeledz and Senator Schimek have done a good job of laying the groundwork for what...what the bill does and what the bill is all about. First of all, where does the bill come from? As Senator Schimek had indicated, it is model legislation. I believe the State of Minnesota has enacted that and the National Marrow Donor Foundation is attempting to have legislation similar passed in all states. My interest in this came about as a result of a little girl who was a friend of my daughter's, lived just down the street from us, who a little over a year ago became a victim of Burkitt's Leukemia, which is a rather rare, particularly deadly form of leukemia. Throughout the course of the neighborhood, attempting to provide support for the family as they were going through this process, we did help organize a drive within the Omaha area community, Papillion community specifically, the Omaha area was also very supportive, to seek a suitable donor for a bone marrow transplant. That drive was a successful drive, one of the most successful drives in the country in terms of sheer numbers. In terms of the goal of the drive to find a specific donor that would match Aidan O'Neil's bone marrow it was unsuccessful and Aidan, first part of this year, did pass away. The family is, frankly, a very remarkable family. They are very strong and very supportive of this legislation and I've circulated a letter on your desk from Rob and Sara O'Neil which does an excellent job of not only talking about their personal experiences but talking about the...this whole field of bone marrow transplants, and I'd like to talk just a little bit about that because the main purpose of introduction of the bill, quite frankly, is to improve awareness of bone marrow transplants and how this is, in