

SENATOR ASHFORD: (Mike off).

PRESIDENT MOUL: And I will recognize Senator Landis to decide which one we will take up first.

SENATOR LANDIS: Thank you. Let's take up the other sections and leave the Section 6 question for a moment and, if I could, for the purpose of those of you who are following your book, identify the divisions that we've made. We've divided out into two...and, by the way, opening your Journal would be very helpful. One is one sentence on page 1574 and then a section on 1575 and they will be dealt with second. The line says, if both parties consent, a joint interview may follow individual interviews. If the case is determined appropriate for mediation and both parties voluntarily agree to mediation, the case may be rescheduled for future mediation sessions. That is...that, plus Section 6, which says, with the consent of both parties, that should be read as one amendment and it will be taken up second. And if we could then do the other parts first, I'd be happy to do that when I'm recognized by the Chair.

PRESIDENT MOUL: You are recognized, Senator Landis, so let's proceed.

SENATOR LANDIS: Thank you. I will begin then. I take it this is my opening now on the first of the two amendments, and I think I understand Senator Ashford to say that he has a good deal of areas of agreement in this set of language. Let me tell you what this set of language is designed to do and I'm certain that Senator Ashford will want to comment on them. We passed, last year, a bill on mediation hoping to create a set of centers around the state and those are being organized now. They are developing boards of directors. They are being submitted for approval by the state so that we can get a system of mediation out across the state. The first thing this amendment does is to harmonize the Parenting Act to the use of the centers, using their staff, using their scheduling to help with the organizing of this Parenting Act process so it harmonizes and basically runs the Parenting Act through the use of those centers for scheduling purposes. Now you'll need mediators in locations where we don't have centers. That's fine. We'll have them on record. They should be able to be used, but for purposes of scheduling an intake, you'd be able to use the centers to do that. Secondly, this indicates that the mediators, which are