

degrees of disagreement. I think that obviously there are certain cases where the parents do, I guess you could say, loathe each other for various reasons, but there are also cases where the parties are just not speaking for various reasons that may or may not include loathing as one of the motivations. So I think that it's very difficult to categorize these 6,500 domestic relations cases in Nebraska as two parties hating each other or loathing each other. I think it's varying degrees of that, but the bottom line point, again, I think we need to come back to it, always is we're protecting the children in this legislation and we are giving them, through this process, a piece of the pie, a part of the action that they are not now getting. Very quickly, very quickly and a point I didn't make before, I'll make again when we get on the bill itself, is that the children today in divorce cases are protected through the guardian ad litem procedure. The problem with the guardian ad litem procedure is normally they are lawyers who are...who are paid by the parties to act as guardian ad litem and they charge normal fees for doing that, so...and that...though this process does not do away with the guardian ad litem, certainly in the states where this has been adopted, the need for guardian ad litem is lessened in those cases where mediation works and that, in and of itself, is going to cut back on fees. These divorce cases, ladies and gentlemen, a simple divorce involving custody and I...and Senator Kristensen might talk about this, maybe he charges lesser fees, but the cases that I've seen, simple divorce custody cases, no, simple's probably not the right word but at least not involving a lot of money and custody, for example, of one child can cost anywhere up to...anywheres up between 2,500 and 5,000 dollars at a minimum, and that's a very expensive procedure. So I think that anything we can do to try to curtail some of that unnecessary expenditure I think would be helpful to the litigants. Thank you.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Ashford. Senator Kristensen.

SENATOR KRISTENSEN: Thank you, Madam President, members of the Legislature. I think at this point I hear the sponsors of the bill agreeing with that section of our amendment and so I don't think that there's much need to spend a lot of time in debate on that. Senator Ashford, at this point, Senator Ashford, could I ask you a question?

SENATOR ASHFORD: Yes.