

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Abboud. Senator Pirsch.

SENATOR PIRSCH: Thank you, Madam President. I also rise to support this amendment and this concept, but...and actually I commend Senator Landis for all the work that he has done, both in binding arbitration and mediation. It has been a good alternative to our legal system, but, Senator Landis, I do have some questions that maybe you could give us some...shed some light on. In binding arbitration, which you establish, both sides must agree to participate and they must agree to abide by that decision. Is that not correct? And mediation, it seems to me, is less stringent and I am trying to remember if in your mediation legislation, did that mandate that all parties participate?

SENATOR LANDIS: It did not.

SENATOR PIRSCH: Okay. So then this truly would fit the criteria of your mediation concept.

SENATOR LANDIS: With the adoption of both sets of my amendments, yes, that would comport to what I would define as mediation. What we have before us is a certain set of technical changes. We're about to get to a second change and that does raise the issue of where we are on the spectrum of mediation as you move closer to arbitration. Without the second change, I would not say that they are exactly similar. There's a significant difference between what we did last year and the Parenting Act unless the second amendment is successful.

SENATOR PIRSCH: Okay. Then how does the conciliation court fit in? As I understand it, if one wants to go, that is somewhat like mediation and yet I think that's perceived as a very weak court and mediation device and I guess I'm trying to jump ahead here and figure out how I'm going to accept your next amendment, but I do support this amendment and the concept of the mediation Parenting Act.

SENATOR WARNER PRESIDING

SENATOR WARNER: Senator Beutler.

SENATOR BEUTLER: ..Landis a few questions, if I may. I want to be sure I understand how this relates to possibly what Senator Ashford was doing and just how it relates generally to the law.