

if you have voluntary mediation that the people who do want to have the best interests of their children will go and mediate. Mediation means that you're going to have to have people voluntarily work together anyway outside of the court system. I think that's a good goal. That's a goal I think you ought to encourage, but mandating them to go do that and sit across the table from each other and say now, look, you're going to get along and you're going to talk these things out isn't going to enhance that.

PRESIDENT MOUL: One minute.

SENATOR KRISTENSEN: Now it looks great on paper, it sounds great and a brochure, well, we're going to be for the children and this is a...Senator Ashford used the term, this is a children's bill of rights, we're going to put the children back in the process. Let me tell you, the children aren't going to be involved in that process. Most of them are young. Most of them, if they are older, have opinions about who they are going to live with anyway. What this really is all about is leverage and this is one more system to add leverage to that. If people are genuinely concerned, they can agree to disagree. Good and decent people get divorced every day in this state. Some of them, tremendous amount of acrimony. Some of them are peaceful, reasonable people who just can't live and get along together. But if you're going to force those people to go into mediation, I think you're going to cause more resentment with the system. It's going to become a more difficult system. Those who want to voluntarily go to mediation...

PRESIDENT MOUL: Time.

SENATOR KRISTENSEN: ...who recognize they can't along but need to get along for the purposes of the kids will.

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

SENATOR ASHFORD: Thank you, Madam President, I think that so often we make decisions on these kinds of bills because the buzz words that are used and are thrown around and they stick in our heads. Senator Landis continued to use the word "obligatory" and Senator Kristensen talked about creating a new system on top of an existing system and then we think about that and we think, oh, my goodness, we're burdening the system with another system.