

April 2, 1992

LB 78

CLERK: Mr. President, Senator Hillman would move to amend Senator Bernard-Stevens' amendment. (Hillman amendment appears on page 1870 of the Legislative Journal.)

SPEAKER BAACK: Senator Hillman.

SENATOR HILLMAN: Mr. Speaker, members of the Legislature, Senator Bernard-Stevens, I want to thank you for bringing the resolution to LB 78 because I think it gives us an opportunity, and I'm going to say an out or an avenue to look at what we can do to address this situation that all of us have a lot of concerns about, not bypass it, not spend a lot of time on it, but to be able to handle it today and then look at it till next year. Senator Rasmussen and myself spent quite a bit of time in the past year looking at what we thought was a teenage pregnancy study, found out that as we got into the subject there was much, much more involved than what we had originally thought, and as a result of that have been looking for ways to continue it and where we need to go to get a good handle on how we can work with the prevention of teenage pregnancy. So what my amendment does to your resolution, Senator Bernard-Stevens, is to add a Section 3, and what it would say is, the Legislature should consider establishing a task force with the Department of Health as the lead agency to address health issues, including adolescent pregnancies, that adversely affect adolescents. Senator Rasmussen and myself have worked with Dr. Mark Horton who is the Director of the State Department of Health off and on in a lot of different issues and, as a matter of fact, coincidentally was meeting with him this morning to see about continuing this study. And in our conversations with him have found out that there is a great need for looking at just adolescents and how some of their problems relate to health issues. Teenage pregnancy is only one of the symptoms that there is something wrong here in relation, we think, to health. It has to do with early smoking, or starting smoking, it has to do with drinking, it has to do with teenage suicides, a lot of areas there, but also one of those components is teenage pregnancies. I think it behooves this body to look at the Department of Health and setting some things in place that looks that they can help them do what they envision in the future of setting up a Nebraska task force on adolescent health issues. Dr. Horton is a pediatrician and has done already I think a lot of investigative work in this area and needs some assistance from all of us to continue it, but to be able to put a task force in place that would be viable that would look at the