

September 30, 1992 LB 3

schools regardless of how well we try to plan. Senator Rasmussen reaffirmed my conviction that there will be a decline in the interest in being foster parents when she points out that some natural parents have been encouraged to place their children as wards of the state so as to get that kind of assistance. If, in fact, the local school would encourage natural parents to place...to declare their children wards of the state to save money, then does it not follow that those same schools would certainly discourage anyone from becoming a foster parent and bringing a special needs child into the school system? I'm not an expert on this, far be it. There are those of you here who have studied it much more than I have. I respect your judgment. I respect your dedication to children. I think that I do support very wholeheartedly Senator Withem's amendment which calls for us to take a look at it in every program and in every program there is, no doubt, abuse. One of the concerns I have, which I am afraid has not been mentioned here, is that we're not talking about livestock. We're not talking about automobiles. We're not talking about utilities. We're talking about living, breathing human beings. One of the big concerns of the foster care program is the number of placements of a child in a variety of homes as being far to excessive. One of the big problems we have with foster children is that they never ever find roots. They never ever find anyone with whom they can bond and I'm concerned that, by doing what we are doing here today, we're going to increase the turnover in those foster homes of children and going to decrease the availability of foster parents, going to be more likely to put these children in group homes, which may or may not be good, but the facts are that the bottom line is there isn't really an advocate for the child here today. We are all advocates, I know, but it isn't...there isn't anyone here beating the drums and shouting and screaming for that foster child out there who is going to be the person who is affected by this bill. Thank you.

SENATOR WARNER: Senator Lynch. The question has been called. Do I see five hands? The motion is, shall debate cease? Those in favor vote aye, opposed nay. Have you all voted? Clerk, record.

CLERK: 26 ayes, 0 nays to cease debate, Mr. President.

SENATOR WARNER: The motion is carried and debate is ceased. Senator Moore, do you wish to close on the amendment?