

families, we took maybe too many steps, took too long to try and keep the family together and sometimes they were simply in a situation where that family could not be held together, so this is an attempt to balance the pendulum back to the middle. I think it's a very appropriate step and I hope we'll be able to have the bill advance this afternoon. Oh, yeah, I give time to Senator Schimek, the cosponsor.

SENATOR CROSBY: The cosponsor.

SENATOR SCHIMEK: Thank you, Senator Wesely. May I ask how many minutes are left?

SENATOR CROSBY: About four minutes.

SENATOR SCHIMEK: Okay, I will be brief. I did not originally help introduce this bill. It was Senator McKenzie's bill and when she brought it to Health and Human Services Committee I thought to myself, why didn't I introduce this bill because it has been a concern of mine ever since I have been in this Legislature and particularly since we did the study on child abuse several years ago. I'm not going to go into detail, but like Senator McKenzie, I've got a young child that I'm aware of and we have been following for a period of months now that I am very concerned about. It's one of these kind of situations where I question whether the reunification is ever going to work. I don't want to interfere with the Social Services decisions, but I think that this will help clarify where the emphasis should be. Voices for Children said when they came in on this bill that they were concerned about it when the Family Policy Act passed back in 1987 and they don't want to oppose the bill, but they did request amendment language. Some language has since been added, but there still seems to be confusion about this issue. I think this will make it very clear. Thank you.

SENATOR CROSBY: Thank you, Senator Schimek. Senator Witek.

SENATOR WITEK: Madam Chairman, I do have concerns on this bill but I don't want to slow it down so it doesn't pass necessarily today and I will work with Senator McKenzie before Select File and try to work out some of those concerns. Thank you.

SENATOR CROSBY: Thank you, Senator Witek. Senator Vrtiska.