

The concern is, at least as I understand it from the agencies, is that the requirement in statute will make it mandatory and in order to make sure that all the steps are followed it will be another step in the process that will be required. One of the concerns that they have is the increased costs with regard to the additional steps that are put in place and that is something that I guess I was unaware of the change. As you well know, I used to work for an agency that did adoptions for a number of years and still does. They were, I think, one of the oldest, if not the oldest, adoption agency in the Omaha area and I think when I left their employ an adoption, as much as we don't like to talk about them, they do cost money. At that time, they were one of the lowest and they continue to be one of the lowest cost adoption agencies. At that time it was about 2,500 dollars and I asked, because I hadn't been involved or been around the folks in awhile, just what the cost of an adoption was now at the agency and they said it had gone up to 7,500 dollars and that they were still one of the lowest in the area. That is amazing to me and I...I guess... but when you consider the issues that you're dealing with and the, I guess, concern, the necessary... the need for the...not only the expertise in terms of counseling and other things, that that is not I guess an outrageous figure in light of some of the fees that are charged with regard to private placements. As Senator Chambers stated earlier this morning when he said folks come in, pay their 50,000 dollars, buy a baby and jet back to wherever they came from. So these are some of the concerns that were raised by folks in the adoption agencies. This proposal, as it's drafted, as it's been in your bill book for a month so you've had an opportunity to take a look at it, is a complete rewrite of the proposal. It is...does not move as far as LB 712 would, but at the same time it incorporates some of the changes that 712 has in it and, in fact, some of them are identical. With that, I would offer the amendment, urge its adoption, respond to any questions that members may have, but again I would urge the body to vote this up or down one way or the other and not prolong the debate on the proposal, because the votes are either there or they're not there for this measure. Thank you, Madam President.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator Hall. Senator Wesely, your light is next. Senator Wesely.

SENATOR WESELY: Thank you, Mr. (sic) President... (laugh) Okay, Madam President, members of the Legislature, I appreciate Senator Hall and his attempt to offer up an alternative to the