

The issue he is talking about is really an issue of whether a young woman in Omaha correctly, voluntarily, knowingly relinquished her child for adoption. It was a court case decided by the Supreme Court. The law in this state has always been and remains and under that case is that a relinquishment is only valid if it is knowingly, intentionally, and voluntarily made, and the court can set aside any relinquishment that is not knowingly, intelligently, and voluntarily made. The safeguard for any woman is the law of this state on that issue. Again, I repeat, that is not an issue that is involved in this particular bill. I can understand Senator Chambers being upset by that case. That's not relevant to what we are talking about here. We could spend hours debating that case, if we wish to. I have the reported opinion here, the decision actually of the Court of Appeals, in the Jones case, Tina Helene Jones case, which was decided April 4th of 1995. That isn't the issue before us. The issue before us is whether we want to improve the adoption laws of this state, so that young people are encouraged to adopt children, so that mothers of children born out of wedlock are encouraged to place their children for adoption as a viable alternative to possible other alternatives that are much, much less desirable. I think, again, that this matter has been fully discussed and I really have nothing further to say, unless someone has any questions. I would urge this body to not return this bill and to, of course, not adopt Senator Chambers amendment.

SPEAKER WITHEM: Senator Wesely.

SENATOR WESELY: Mr. Speaker, members, I know that Senator Chambers is...has been...has been concerned about a number of provisions of the bill. I also know specifically the problem that Senator Matzke is saying, that we have not agreed to address in the legislation is, as was indicated, something a little above and beyond what we were focusing in on, and Senator Matzke indicates he doesn't think the law ought to change, I come at it thinking that it ought to change. And so between the two of us, we should come to a reasonable compromise working with Senator Chambers as to whether or not we go forward and how we would, if we should. But, you know, the evolution of adoption laws is kind of amazing, and this step I hope we are going to be taking here tonight in passing LB 712, if we have the chance, really, really is a step that has been needed, and clearly with court cases that have been coming forward in the last few years, it was a matter of time. We are moving quicker