

January 22, 1996 LB 592

think the Witek amendment will not prevent the harm from occurring, but it will at least allow an avenue of redress.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator Lindsay. Senator Beutler.

SENATOR BEUTLER: I would like to give my time to Senator Bohlke, if I may.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Senator Bohlke.

SENATOR BOHLKE: Madam President and members, thank you, Senator Beutler. There is an amendment that has appeared on your desk and at this time I just thought we had not talked about some of the other points that I think are particularly important. As we get into the whole issue, of course all of us want to do what is best for children. What is best for children is when the child support there is to support them. But also what is best for children certainly is trying to work out those disagreements and arguments that come up in the whole area of divorce, certainly around the issues of parenting time, what those schedules may be, and this amendment goes to that. A number of us served on a task force during the last interim looking at those issues and working with those noncustodial families and parents who came before us and talked about the things that seemed to them to be very important, issues that they talked about wanting to be involved in their children's lives and how to ensure that that happens. I think that as you read the amendment you will see that it goes to some of those points. I know that Senator Lindsay, when we get to the amendment, will be talking about the family court, but also the court may order mediation based upon the request of either parent or upon the courts own motion. That was a very key issue that we discussed on the task force. I don't know if a number of you remember that at one point in time Senator Ashford actually introduced that on the floor of the Legislature, and at that time I wasn't sure, and in fact I did not support the idea of the mandatory mediation. Certainly I think it is a debate and discussion that we will need to have. But, it certainly seems to me that when you have the opportunity to settle a number of the issues, that as we get involved in this, seem to keep parents arguing and children torn, need to be discussed. I don't think that we can avoid discussing them and trying to find a way to solve some of those issues. Because it is only when you solve those issues that it seems to me that the child really benefits. Even if the support is ordered for the