

above, in a sense, but broaden what we're trying to do in terms of the state working with communities. We...there's a whole different attitude, as I said before, in the approach to how we provide services, and the idea that we're trying to embody in this bill is that rather than having the state dictate down and say fit into these categories and you get your help. If you don't fit, well, that's too bad and we're not going to cross the lines. We are trying to open it up, have more flexibility, and to try and react out to communities and empower them to be able to bring their resources together, to identify the problems that they face, and to come up with a solution that matches their resources and their needs, and work with the state to overcome the problems that they have. So the partnership is, in a sense, to be filled with people that have a broad range of expertise; yes, advocates, but also individuals who are community leaders, individuals who come out of the sort of partnerships we want to form, with local governments, with private sector, nonprofit organizations, advocacy organizations. This is too restrictive, the amendment by Senator Avery is too restrictive and, in fact, takes us backwards, not forwards, and I understand where he is coming from. This is the old way we've done everything. Find a group and give a slot to everybody and then miss a few people and add the numbers and give them a slot, and eventually, you have a 35-member board and still people are mad because they are not involved in it. That's...we've got those. They exist already. Let them continue for now. Let's talk about something different, and I think that something different is very exciting. I think we've got to recognize that the idea that we've got all the answers back here isn't working, that the communities out there have a better handle on what's happening there at home. They know what their family situations and children situations are, what the problems are, what sort of help that they can bring to bear on the problems that exist in their communities, whether the churches are strong or whether the nonprofit group, maybe there is a private sector group, but in every community there will be something different. And the idea is for them to bring their people together, bring their resources together, work with the state, and find a way to address the problems we have. That is what we have missed in some ways and what we need to try and provide bridges for today. So I understand Senator Avery's concern. I oppose the amendment though. The current openness of the council is intended to provide a different kind of partnership than what is being proposed here. Not that we shouldn't have advocates, not that