

CLERK: 1054, Senator.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Thank you.

SENATOR WESELY: Well, let me...let me indicate that there is a desire, I talked to Senator Withem, there is a desire to try and reach an accommodation on this amendment. The reason is that Senator Bernard-Stevens is correct that ultimately one of the advantages of bringing these agencies together will be to share information and to better coordinate activity and services, and so that naturally means we're are going to have to be in a position where we can cross-reference data and benefit from information that's generated from different sources. So, ultimately, one of the great gains that we would have would be to take basic information and share it. So I don't think there is any objections to the thrust of what Senator Bernard-Stevens is talking about. The counterbalancing concern expressed by Senator Dierks and in the amendment that we adopted earlier is the exchange of data must also have protections for confidentiality, that we can't be in a situation where very basic information about an individual, very private and personal information about an individual gets thrown out on the Internet or cyberspace or wherever it ends up and everybody can have access to it. I know that's not Senator Bernard-Stevens' intent. That's not anybody's intent, I wouldn't think, on this matter, but trying to make sure we balance off the needs for access to exchange information with the need to protect private and confidential information is where we've been from the beginning on this issue. So in other words, all I'm saying is that I know there is a desire to try to work with Senator Bernard-Stevens, and we'll see if we can't come up with language that's satisfactory. Thank you.

PRESIDENT ROBAK: Thank you, Senator Wesely. Senator Withem.

SPEAKER WITHEM: Madam President, members of the body, I, for one, will be voting in favor of the Bernard-Stevens amendment. As I understood Senator Dierks' concern, it was a very valid one. I supported his desire to not open up a lot of very highly confidential records to public scrutiny, and I believe his amendment did that. I also, as I expressed when that amendment was going through, have a very basic concern about the need for the types of information that agencies need to share among themselves, if we are going to begin to deal with human beings