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SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Wickersham. Senator Kristensen, Suttle amendment, AM2915, to the committee amendments. Senator Kristensen, followed by Senators Thompson, Dierks and Crosby. Senator Kristensen.

SPEAKER KRISTENSEN: Thank you, Mr. President and members of the Legislature. Senator Wickersham made some reference to an amendment that is there. Senator Suttle has been one of the most patient women. This amendment started back when there was a blizzard a couple of years ago, and she...Senator Suttle, do you remember this story, she had her CASA bill come up and there was 26 people here and, Senator Chambers, that...that day it was consent calendar because if one person left the room there was no business transacted that day. There were questions raised. Senator Suttle, of course, I think was not particularly happy with that result that day and the bill didn't go. She came back and tried again and there was a study and, quite frankly, frankly she has been very patient to bring CASA back in a form that I believe meets a number of the objections that we had. The one objection, the question that I had obviously was with the guardian ad litem which may be Chinese to some of you but the guardian ad litem is an appointed position. That guardian ad litem can do examinations, and by that go out and find witnesses, to call them to help the court in some form or fashion. The guardian ad litem generally is a lawyer who cross-examines witnesses because the county attorney may be there, let's say that it is a case where they are trying to take the children away, put them in foster care or terminate the parental rights. The county attorney would be there representing probably the Department of Social Services, there would be a lawyer there representing the parents, and the question would be who represents the interest of the child or the children? Who can call witnesses to say, well, look, I really don't want to be taken away from home but I also can't go back home, how do I do this, and that is what the guardian ad litem may do. Senator Suttle's amendment, which I believe is a recommendation from a study and I don't want to misrepresent it. I think that study occurred. I do think they all agreed to this and I'm just...I don't think Senator Suttle was trying to put anything at all in here. She's doing exactly as a good trooper would do and I think represents to you what the committee agreed to, and I think that the Judiciary Committee