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LB 54

LB 54 to pass from that standpoint. And so that would be my offer to you. I think it's reasonable because I think the goal that's in place is, is that we have the opportunity to access the federal dollars that are available to us for our foster care program that we're currently not accessing. And by allowing the flexibility for the department to review, just like they do on every other case of where they place those kids, but also then whether or not that family, if they're related to the individual, or that individual, if they're related to the foster child, is placed whether they need training or not. That is the issue at hand. The definition that Senator Raikes brought in was just peripheral, and so, from that standpoint, I would be willing to strike that from the bill. It would alleviate your concerns that those individuals that you speak about are not being discriminated against, but it would also still allow the department to look at those cases on an individual basis and say, is it in the best interest of the child? If it's in the best interest of the child, they're going to place him in the home that they see fit and they're not going to look at the individual based on other circumstances. And so I think we can accomplish both goals if we strike the language. It should alleviate your fear that those individuals are left out of the definition, and it should allow the bill to move forward, which says that we can still access the federal funds under training. That would be my offer to you. I think it's reasonable. I know what your goal is and I think that, from the standpoint of what's already in practice and what's already the policy of the department, they're actually alleviating your concern. But I also wanted to make sure that it's not their intent, as you have said, to, well, go for cloture. That was not the people that we had talked to about that, or at least that I had talked to about that. But I think the offer that I've made to you of striking the "relative" language from the bill still allows the department to do what they're doing, and that is accommodate individuals in the system based on the best interest of the child, not using specific examples to determine whether or not that individual is qualified or not. So that would be my offer to you. Obviously, it's totally up to you. You can take this to a vote if you would like. You do what you see fit. But I think that the process in place does not discriminate because the goal is, is that we look out for the best interest of that