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to have a visitor from the state say we're interested in you and your baby, and how remarkable it was that she, an elderly 40-year-old, had questions about that baby. Well, I'm not surprised at the questions. I was not quite that elderly but very old when our first child was born, and I can still remember at 3:00 in the morning looking down at this baby and I still had an hour to go on my shift with a baby that would not quit crying and nobody could figure out why. And you think, what am I going to do about this? You long for somebody to give advice, counsel, support, anything. Our daughter later, as we reflected on it, said, what would have been different in some of these places that I have visited if someone had been there from the state before they got...before an 18-year-old got totally exasperated with her baby? It would have been quite different in the cases that I have had to go to see and that I've been drawn into. What would be different if they could get answers beside what a grandmother and an aunt are giving? I see this as a critical direction for the state and for my area. I have to emphasize that in my area, which is almost all African-American, they have a network and an extended family system that covers a lot of this. You are not alone.

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.

SENATOR KRUSE: But our daughter was alone, and most of the white people in my community and district are alone. They came from a community out in the middle of Nebraska. They're hundreds of miles from a grandparent. They need support. That support can pay off over the long haul. I support the amendment and the bill, and hope that we can commit to this direction and see how it leads us and how we can go on it. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Kruse. Senator Synowiecki, followed by Senator Stuhr and others. Senator Synowiecki, did you...are you present?

SENATOR SYNOWIECKI: Sorry. Thank you, Senator Cudaback, members. I want to also echo my colleagues' sentiments to Senator Howard. I very much appreciate your passion. I appreciate the commitment to child welfare issues. I very much appreciate your insights as a former state employee in the area.