

sensitivity and I'm always very cautious about any step backward from what we've got in place on child abuse reporting to its implication of further change. So I'll have around for you some copies of those...of statutes, and, again, I am not totally opposed now because of the Hohenstein amendment, but because of my uncertainty, I am still opposed to the amendment, and think that the amendment Ashford will offer here shortly will be a better way to go.

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Wesely. Senator Ashford, on the Chambers amendment.

SENATOR ASHFORD: Mr. Speaker, are there any other amendment or any other speakers, I am sorry?

SPEAKER BAACK: No, there are not.

SENATOR ASHFORD: I will just waive off then.

SPEAKER BAACK: Senator Chambers, did you wish to close on your amendment?

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Yes, Mr. Speaker and members of the Legislature, the amendment now, and I'm saying what I'm saying for the sake of the record. This bill, LB 629, has had a kind of bumpy ride getting from its introduction to the point where we find it today, and the part that I played in it I would like to be as clear as possible. So I will state my understanding of the amendment as amended by Senator Hohenstein's amendment. if in the process of the mediation there is a disclosure of abuse, the mediator is still required to be a stool pigeon, Senator Rasmussen, but he or she will be a stoolie only to the judge. The judge will then make a determination based on the information presented, and if it appears that more investigation is needed to determine if abuse exists, that order for additional investigation will be made. If the judge makes a finding that abuse probably exists, my understanding is that the judge would then be required to contact a prosecuting agency and tell them that this evidence has come in on child abuse, and then a criminal charge would have to be filed as it would ordinarily. That's my understanding of how the amendment would work. I don't like the idea of the mediator having to be the stoolie, but sometimes you get the best that you can, and in this old sin-cursed imperfect world, maybe what's before us now is the best we can get on this particular issue. If this