

SPEAKER BAACK: Senator Ashford.

SENATOR ASHFORD: AM1725, not AM1704.

CLERK: It's AM1704 with your handwritten changes, does that make sense?

SENATOR ASHFORD: All right, yes, thank you, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: It's the final draft.

SENATOR ASHFORD: Thank you. It just doesn't say 1725 on the one I have but that's fine, I think 1725 is great. Essentially, the language, Mr. Speaker, for this amendment reads that prior to the commencement of mediation, the parties to mediation shall be notified by the mediator that evidence of any abuse shall be reported pursuant to state and federal law." And this is the...it simply does what I've said. It requires the mediator to go through this step to make certain that the mediator makes sure the parties are aware of the requirement that the mediator give the information to...report the information about abuse. But that amendment also strikes from the bill all reference to the juvenile court taking any domestic relations cases. I'm striking that because my idea behind it was to try to take the first step towards a family court and, quite frankly, we are just not ready to make that first step yet. There is just too many procedural things that have to be gone through and it's going to create more problems than it would solve, so I am striking all the reference in the bill to the juvenile court taking domestic relations cases, at the request of the district court. It is a little technical but it doesn't really necessarily relate specifically to the mediation process at all. So to be consistent with making this simply now a mediation bill, I am taking that out, and also requiring this reporting of...the requirement that the mediator tell the litigants about his or her requirement to report abuse. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Ashford. Before I proceed to the next speaker, I would like to introduce some guests of the Legislature. We have guests of Senator Cudaback. They are 16 sixth graders from the Sumner Eddyville Miller School and their teacher. Would you folks please stand and be welcomed by the Legislature. Thank you for being here. Senator Chambers, on the Ashford amendment.