

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Lindsay. Senator Beutler.

SENATOR BEUTLER: Mr. President, members of the Legislature, I just wanted to speak briefly in favor of advancing the bill. Maybe some of you feel like I do, you feel a little bit uncomfortable with the clear and convincing standard. You feel even a little more uncomfortable with just a relevant evidence standard. I think what we need to do here is advance this to Select File and allow the parties to get together and work for that middle ground, there is middle ground, there is a standard called preponderance of the evidence. There are other things that can be done to reach a middle ground on this. If we leave this at General File, I think Senator Hall feels very strongly about this, it will be brought back up again. It's a senator's priority bill. It can be motions to reconsider. It seems to me that the logical thing to do in terms of process is to advance this to Select File and see if the parties can come to a reasonable agreement on this rather than get bogged down like we've been on 5...759 and a number of other bills this year. There's no point in doing that if you don't believe there is a middle ground, but I think most of do believe there's a middle ground. We ought to shoot it over there to Select and let the parties see if they can come to that conclusion. Thank you.

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Beutler. Senator Chambers.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Mr. Speaker and members of the Legislature, I want to try to draw an analogy again of what I'm talking about so that people who may not be familiar with the operation of the criminal justice system can understand what the underlying issue here is. It's one of fairness and having a timely opportunity to defend yourself against a charge that might be used at some point to convict you of a crime unrelated to this other incident. There are some news media outlets that will not accept a tax against a campaign opponent within a certain period of the election because the opponent will not have an opportunity to respond. Legislators and people running for public office can understand that. The one attacked must be given an opportunity that is fair to respond. We're not talking about somebody accused of a crime, but merely running for an office. Under this bill, if you reject what the bill is trying to do, an act that a person had no idea would ever be brought against him or her by way of accusation would be allowed to be considered when that person is charged with a crime and as Tim