

SENATOR HOHENSTEIN: I move that LB 629 be advanced to E & R for engrossing.

SENATOR HALL: You've heard the motion. All those in favor signify by saying aye. Opposed. The bill is advanced. Mr. Clerk.

ASSISTANT CLERK: Mr. President, Senator Wesely would move to return the bill.

SENATOR HALL: Senator Wesely.

SENATOR WESELY: Thank you, Mr. President, members. I did pass around for you a letter from Mary Dean Harvey written to me in response to the amendment we adopted on Select File on this bill raising concerns about the amendment, still feeling that the process set up by the amendment, which bypasses the current child abuse reporting system and goes directly to a judge, has problems and concerns but, nevertheless, if we maintain that approach, she suggested some technical changes to deal with the problem of how this would be handled by the judge and clarify the abuse and neglect reference by it. And so this amendment is found attached to the handout for you, and will ease the concerns of the Department of Social Services. I have run these by Senator Ashford, and I also tried to talk to Senator Hohenstein about them, and I think that there should be no problem with them, and it would help deal with some of the concerns that I had on Select File. With that, I'd be happy to answer questions, and I move to return the bill and adopt the amendment.

SENATOR HALL: Thank you, Senator Wesely. Senator Hohenstein, on the motion to return.

SENATOR HOHENSTEIN: Mr. President and members, briefly, if you remember the debate on the floor was the discussion of whether we should or should not allow mediators to report incidents of child abuse. The amendment was drafted rather hastily on the floor, and I think the suggestions of Mary Dean Harvey are appropriate and they do clarify some of the concerns we had. They will still allow the bypass to the judge, but they clarify how that would happen and also require it to be done timely. I'd support the amendment.

SENATOR HALL: Thank you, Senator Hohenstein. Senator Ashford,