

SPEAKER BAACK: Senator Chambers.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Mr. Speaker and members of the Legislature, thank you, Senator Vrtiska. What Senator Landis and others have indicated does touch on the really divisive and unfortunate turn that things have taken when trying to deal with this issue of abortion. Like so many other things, if it were possible to leave the decision in the hands of the person or persons directly involved without intrusion by any outsiders, I think the problem would lose the heat, the ability to grab headlines and it would cease to fuel this engine of hatred that I see growing in this country. There are enough things to divide people without this issue, but this one seems to have a virulence and a bitterness that the others tend to lack. There is a sustained, ongoing, persistent tugging and pulling and twisting at this issue. I think there are people on both sides of the question who feel and believe very deeply whatever it is that moves them. But I favor the side that says the woman is the one who should make this decision, who should exercise her right to make a choice. I have said before, as have others, that the decision to have an abortion is not something that a woman would make in the same way she would decide to wear some blue shoes as opposed to gray shoes with a blue suit. But when it's discussed by the other side there is often the indication that women just, in a flip, spur-of-the-moment way, will say, I think I'll go get an abortion. I read a very interesting article in one of the Letters To The Editor's columns. I don't remember whether it was the Lincoln paper or the Omaha paper but the person writing the article was criticizing an ad that had run in the paper at the instigation of people who called themselves pro-life. They had talked about the person getting the abortion in a very disparaging way. They had used terms that would suggest the woman who gets an abortion might be committing a crime against her child, things of the traditional sort. This lady mentioned that the friend of her who had an abortion had to get that abortion because her life was endangered, that the people who called themselves pro-life make no distinction and play upon the hurt feelings of women who may, believe it or not, obtain an abortion even though they don't want one. There are circumstances and exigencies beyond their control that put them in that unfortunate circumstance. So it would be good if distinctions could be made when these blanket condemnations are hurled or attempts are made to cause a person...