

the third area which my amendment goes to, and I want to talk about it at some length, essentially eliminates, the third part of this bill essentially eliminates private placement of children for the purpose of adoption. It essentially requires, the bill requires at this time all adoptions to be affected through licensed child care agencies or the Nebraska Department of Public Welfare. There is an exception and the exception is this: A parent of a child may place that child himself or herself with his own parents, his stepparents or his brothers or sisters and that is it but any other kind of private placement that that parent would want to do is prohibited by this act. It is a significant change to Nebraska law. My amendment, my amendment strikes the sections that eliminate private placement. My amendment would say that private placement of children for adoption can continue unabated in this state. I very strongly believe in the private placement concept. It has been my experience as a lawyer who has represented poor people for a number of years that there are a number of poor people who have children who decide after the first year or two that they no longer can adequately rear their children as they would hope to do and they make private arrangements with friends or grandparents or uncles or aunts or other people they know to have the child placed with the other family. They make those arrangements and they come to me as a lawyer and they say simply can you effect the adoption for me and I work it out and I get a relinquishment and a consent and we go to court and get it done. Now along the way the Nebraska Department of Public Welfare has to approve of that arrangement. Furthermore, the county court has to approve of that arrangement, and if the county court doesn't approve or the Nebraska Department of Public Welfare doesn't approve, the adoption is not going to be effected and the child can be put in foster care. But in the absence of those kinds of private arrangements, that parent who is giving some thought about terminating his or her relationship to that child has got to deal with a child care agency or with the Nebraska Department of Public Welfare and many people don't want to deal with institutions. They want to deal with persons they know or they can relate to and they will always know what has happened with their child. So I strongly support the continuation in this state of private placement adoptions when, of course, the person making the placement is the parent. Now the arguments against private placement are fairly simple. Licensed child care or licensed placing agencies, child placement agencies say simply there is a black market in babies. There is a black market in children and what is happening is lawyers and doctors in particular