

SENATOR HABERMAN: Mr. President and members of the Legislature, I have talked with the attorneys and district judges and the county judges and this will save the average citizen thousands of dollars not only in the eastern part of the state but basically the western part of the state due to the travel and the shortage of courts. And they are capable of handling them and if Senator Beutler said they are uncontested, they always have the option of going to the other court. But I think it is a good bill. It won't hurt anything and I would like to ask that you advance it. Thank you.

PRESIDENT: Senator Higgins.

SENATOR HIGGINS: Thank you, Mr. President. I would like to ask Senator Haberman a question if he would yield.

PRESIDENT: Go ahead.

SENATOR HIGGINS: Senator Haberman, would this apply clear across the state or just to your district or specific districts?

SENATOR HABERMAN: This would be statewide, Senator Higgins.

SENATOR HIGGINS: Thank you, Senator.

SENATOR HABERMAN: You are welcome.

PRESIDENT: Senator Beutler. Excuse me, Senator Beutler, Senator Hoagland has his light on first. Senator Hoagland.

SENATOR HOAGLAND: Let me just make a couple of brief comments in support of LB 146 if I might, Mr. President. I think it is important to note that the county judges throughout the state have extensive authority already in many cases where the decisions they make are even more important than the kind of decisions they would be called upon to make in dissolution of marriage actions under this bill. For instance, currently in most of parts of the state the county judges often act as juvenile judges, and in that capacity make decisions about terminating the rights of a parent to his child, in other words, taking the child away from a family and putting it up for adoption. In other areas the county judges also have extensive authority so I think if any of you are concerned about the fact that the