

SENATOR BEUTLER: Mr. Speaker and members of the Legislature, I haven't spoken on this particular issue except once to express my mixed reactions to the proposition. But it is interesting how psychology building is all a part of this process that operates on you and I. The psychology that was sought to be created the moment this bill hit the floor was, people are stalling, we have got to get the hour...they are trying to stall to get the hour up and all legitimate questions become illegitimate questions. But, frankly, I think the question you should ask yourself is, how did this bill get on the agenda? We have an established priority bill system, the individual senators' priority bills. Senator Lowell Johnson chose not to make this a priority bill. Those are supposed to come first and then after that the committee priority bills and then after that the Speaker's bills. And many, many, many of those bills have not come up and may not come up. Now when we set up the priority bill system we didn't say anything about the Speaker's power to put things on special order vis-a-vis the priority bill system, how that was to fit together. If you read the rules strictly, things shouldn't come up on special order with the priority bill system in place. I could argue that very strongly and I think I could convince most of you if you read the rules that that is the case. But since we were trying out the priority bill system, we allowed the special order idea to continue but it was used very strictly for emergency situations, for things that could not have been anticipated by the priority bill system, for example. Now all of a sudden the special order idea is being used simply because somebody has some special relationship or, I don't know, you have to answer that in your own mind. How is it that a bill that is not an emergency matter in any sense is all of a sudden taking precedence over the priority bill system and moved to the top of the agenda? Especially one known to be highly controversial. Now if Senator Chambers were here today, he would have taken an hour by himself and I assure you if this gets on Select File and Final Reading, there will be at least a day's debate on it, not because it is being stalled, but because I think when you understand the arguments you will understand that it is a controversial measure. When this first came to the Judiciary Committee a couple years ago we all were thinking, yes, great idea, let's do it. But boy, more and more questions began developing. More and more questions, like the standards for the court. How is the judge going to decide whether it is in the best interests of the child?