

agreeing with Senator Vickers, and asking that you vote against the acceptance of this proposition that we are discussing now.

SPEAKER NICHOL: May I please introduce some guests in the north balcony. There are 50 leaders from all over the state that are interested in the grandparents bill that we are discussing. Joe Pelican is their spokesman and they are in the north balcony. Would you folks please stand and be recognized. Thank you. Senator Landis, please.

SENATOR LANDIS: Mr. Speaker, members of the Legislature, I'll support the division of the question, the Vickers amendment. I'll then support the committee amendments because they reduce the scope of the bill, and then I'll vote against the bill. I have two arguments I want to make, and I will tell you that in essence my opinion on this subject comes from the reading of a book called Beyond the Best Interests. It is a book by psychologists who attack the way courts deal with children, and in essence say that the courts are not sufficiently sensitive to the way children and parents operate, that there is a relationship, psychologically, called the psychological parent to the child, somebody that a child looks to to order the world, to be the person who sets the limits for them, the one to whom they look to as an ultimate authority. Now most times that is a blood parent, sometimes it is an adoptive parent, sometimes it is a foster parent, sometimes it is not a parent. But a child needs certainty psychologists will tell you. And the argument of this book, which I found persuasive, is that when the law inserts itself between the psychological parent and the child it creates very unhealthy, psychological ramifications for children who come to think of the uncertainty of the power of their psychological parent over their life, and that uncertainty is very threatening. It means that the court inserts itself and becomes a parent. And the court isn't always there to solve problems, or to be the authority for children that they should be, and that when you play around with the role of psychological parent to child, and make it in jeopardy, and when you place a schedule on when the psychological parent has control on the child or not, you endanger the mental well-being of the child. So I'm not concerned about grandparents' or parents' rights. I'm concerned about children's rights and psychologists will tell me, and what I have found to be the most persuasive reading on the subject,