

with it for eight years. I've traditionally opposed it. As a matter of fact I was the sponsor of a motion to indefinitely postpone Senator Stoney and Senator Nichol's bill in 1980. And it is the kind of issue, I think, that matures and develops as you have an opportunity to think about it. My feelings on the issue have now changed after extensive recent conversations with judges, with grandparents over the last couple of years, with members of the judiciary that handle divorce cases, and I am now convinced that we should allow what this bill allows, what this amendment allows, and that is limited grandparent visitation rights, whether the parents have been married or not, subject to a number of limitations and restrictions. Now I know that Joe Pelican and his army of supporters do not approve of all of the limitations and restrictions we have in this bill. I'm sure Joe, if he were writing this bill himself, would have it more wide open than we have it here. But in the Judiciary Committee we felt that the grandparent visitation supporters can always come in for more liberal rules in future years, but when Nebraska enters the rolls of 45 other states that allow grandparent visitation, for the first time let's do it in a conservative fashion, and let's do it in a way that truly respects the best interests of the children, and these amendments are designed to do that. Now let me give a brief example, in the limited time I have, as to why I would not support the division of the question, why I would support yes on this next vote, why I would vote yes on this next vote and allow the bill to apply in situations where the parents have never been married. Let me give you a hypothetical because hypotheticals are really the grist of the debate on grandparent visitation issues, as they are in adoption issues and other similar issues. Let's take a situation, and this is all too common, unfortunately, in the United States today, where you have two individuals living together in a relatively unstable relationship and they have a child. Let's say they both have jobs and neither of them is real interested in the responsibility for that child so during the days when they go to work they leave the child with the parents of the father, with the paternal grandparents. Let's say that relationship, as shaky as it is, maintains itself for 5 years, or 7 years, or 10 years, until the underlying instability of the relationship takes its toll and those two unmarried people part. And let's say the child, age 8 at this time, goes with the mother as is usually the case. And because of the instability of the