

whether we really need to do this in order to meet the federal law or whether we could meet the federal law with the existing judges. The second thing that we do is that we give the Supreme Court the power by rule to emphasize those types of cases and put them ahead of other types of cases so as to avoid the necessity for referees wherever possible. And the third thing that we do, and we do this not just outstate but in Lancaster, Douglas, and Sarpy County, too, we give the power to the Supreme Court to say you can use county judges to do this if that will avoid appointing a referee or adding new people to the judicial system. So there are a number of things that are different from the previous bill and which hopefully will have the effect of not requiring referees at all. But it is true that because of the federal government, we had to give the Supreme Court the power to decide whether referees might pertain or might be necessary in Douglas, Lancaster, and Sarpy County. They required that much and that is what Kansas City Max says. But if anybody, if Douglas, Lancaster, and Sarpy County want any more than one referee, they have to come to the Legislature, or if anybody else in the state wants a referee, they have to come to the Legislature. So to the extent that we possibly could we have retained the legislative prerogative to decide whether a referee is necessary and we have done that because we wanted to treat it the same as any other judgeship. Remember, the way these referees operate, they are essentially judges. We can't call them judges because the federal government won't let us call them judges but they do everything that a judge does within the narrow jurisdiction of child support and visitation. So because they are judges, we retain the same procedure. The Legislature should approve the appointment of new judges, and the same holds true now of referees except to the extent that we had to give in to the federal government and allow the court to have that prerogative for one judge each in three counties. So that is basically, that is basically the system that is being put in place and I wouldn't argue to that I think it is the best of all worlds but I think it is the closest we can come to what I consider a good public policy given the mandate of the federal government. Thank you.

SPEAKER NICHOL: Senator Marsh, please. The question is, shall debate cease? All those in favor vote aye, opposed nay. Please remain in your seats a few more minutes. Record, Mr. Clerk.