

SPEAKER NICHOL: Debate is ceased. Senator Higgins, would you like to close, please.

SENATOR HIGGINS: Thank you, Mr. President. To correct my good friend and colleague who has worked so hard on this bill, Senator Beutler, this is not a new program with the Department of Social Services. It has been going for one and a half years. Senator Beutler is correct when he said Ms. Dunning said originally that she had two young attorneys that did not know what they were doing, and she had one that did know. But today after one and a half years, they are all doing an excellent job and I will tell you something that makes a little sense to me because five years ago I didn't know what I was doing on the floor of this Legislature. I had no experience. I had no knowledge. I don't think I am doing an excellent job but I am doing a better job than I did five years ago. I am amazed when I found out that young people that get out of law school have never studied statutory law. That just came as a shock to me to find that out. I thought lawyers knew everything but evidently they have to learn some things too, and when they get into the child support mechanism, it is a whole new ball game. As far as what good have they done, we can get the figures for you if you want the figures, the actual figures, but according again to the Department of Social Services, since this program began a year and a half ago child support in 19 counties has increased 50 percent, 50 percent. Now if you want the figures, we will get them for you from the Department of Social Services. Senator Chambers made the point that the Attorney General Office is not now involved in child support and he has had that opportunity all this time to become involved. We already have the attorneys in place that have the experience now doing this. Why start changing, moving over to the Attorney General's Office. They are working well out there with the counties. They are working well with the people in Social Services. They understand the job. They have got the experience, and I question whether, if you went to Bob Spire, my friend, today and said, Bob, would you be interested in taking on another job, knowing Bob Spire like I do, he would say sure I would. I love a challenge. I have had the opportunity to visit with Mr. Spire several times in the cafeteria. I have to tell you I think a great deal of Bob Spire. I have to tell you that I told him, I said, Bob, if a good Democrat doesn't run against you and you decide to run for office, I am going to vote for you but I think anybody could go to Bob Spire