

Withem.

SENATOR WITHEM: Yeah, just a quick comment, and I did not mean for this amendment to take a great deal of time. And those who indicate that it may not be necessary, you may be right. I don't know if it is necessary for...but it does, I think, clarify what the original intent was. Three quick points, number one, I don't see it as a step back. I see it as a clarification of what I intended, anyway, when I first offered my amendment. It was not to get the schools into the business of telling young people how to utilize the judicial bypass, it's to let them know that a bill has passed that affects them. I'm somewhat like Senator Wesely and some other people that I've talked with here on the floor, that making up my mind how to vote on 425 has not been easy. It's not simply, in my case, it's pro-life, so I'm for it, or it's pro-life, so I'm against it. I think that there are lots of things we, as a state, ought to be doing to regulate the area of abortion, without necessarily forestalling that right of a woman to receive one. I don't think it's a matter of pure black and white. I don't think it's a matter of yes, anything that restricts a woman's right to choose is bad, or yes, anything that restricts abortion is good. I think those are two extremes, and I cannot buy either extreme. I think, if 425 has any advantage to the people of the state, it isn't in what happens to the young woman after she becomes pregnant. I think the advantage of the bill, again if there is any, that the knowledge of the bill may give that young woman one more reason to say no when she's being pressured into a sexual situation that she may not desire to get into. It may make that young woman think twice before getting into that situation, that she knows that either alternative to bearing the child, either talking to the parents or going to a court, may not be an advantageous situation. I think that's where the bill has some impact. So I don't see this as a step back from my initial intent. Secondly, I think I tend to agree with some of the people that object to the Michigan way of dealing with this. I don't think the schools ought to be giving specific information on where you can go to get an abortion, how you can bypass the...the parental notification provision. Third, one thing that I don't think that we talked about a great deal in this, and also needs to be brought up, and that is that there are some teachers in the school system that are going to object, quite strongly, to being placed in the role of notifying young women of how to seek an abortion by implementing a judicial bypass. Just like I wouldn't want to put anything in this bill