

Mr. President, Senator Rasmussen would move to amend Senator Bernard-Stevens' amendment. (The Rasmussen amendment appears on page 1876 of the Legislative Journal.)

**SPEAKER BAACK:** Senator Rasmussen, on your amendment to the Bernard-Stevens amendment.

**SENATOR RASMUSSEN:** Mr. Speaker, members of the body, my amendment to Senator Bernard-Stevens' amendment is to add a section that says, "The Legislature shall work together to find solutions to the circumstances contributing to why women have abortions." Senator Bernard-Stevens' resolution talks about finding solutions to the issue regarding informed consent. I'm taking it one step forward and saying, let's start talking about the circumstances and the solutions in response to those circumstances that would prevent or minimize the incident of abortion. Several people have commented that we aren't ever going to agree on the legal status of abortion or abortion rights and I'm not going to change Senator Lindsay's mind or Senator Labedz's mind, Senator Dierks' mind, and they're not going to change mine or Senator Bohlke's or Senator Hillman's. We are not going to agree on this issue, so I ask you why, year after year, do we continue to spend so much time, so much energy, so much emotion debating the legal status of abortion? I really think it serves no purpose, that it only divides us and wastes our resources. I can only think of one reason to have this debate or to continue having it and that's to generate a little heat on a cold Nebraska night. I've watched the battles around the clinics. A few months ago I watched TV coverage and I saw all the people who were against abortion rights, they had themselves chained together in front of the clinic. And then I watched all the people who support abortion rights running around with CBs, talking to each other, and figuring out their next strategy. And I...the only thing I could say is this is craziness, this is sheer craziness. And I fear that somewhere along the line that winning has become the cause, not doing something about abortion, which is what I want to do. I am asking you to take a courageous step and that's to walk away from the pro-choice groups, the pro-life groups and their agenda, and move on to an agenda that is for the people of this state. And maybe it isn't a step, maybe it's a quantum leap in a new direction and that is to talk about what we can do to really make a difference about the incidence of abortion. Senator Morrissey said a good point. Abortions are going to