

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE  
Transcriber's Office  
FLOOR DEBATE

February 20, 2002 LR 6

I'd try to answer any question if I could.

**SPEAKER KRISTENSEN:** We're now debating the Janssen amendment. Senator Thompson, your light was on previous. Do you wish to speak to this amendment? Senator Thompson.

**SENATOR THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, members of the body. I support the amendment and I also support the Beutler amendment, and so I'd like to kind of talk to this amendment that's been presented but also to the concept that it will bring to the...to the amendment that it amends. That was a lot of amendment words in a row. (Laugh) I believe it's...we're at a point in the history of the state where we do need to bring to the people an opportunity to look at the issues of the possibility of expanded gambling. As a state senator, I'm always surprised with how often this topic comes up in discussions that I have with my constituents, and certainly the discussion and the publicity this year has generated a lot of interest again. I represent a county that's very close to the casinos in Iowa, and a lot of people in our county go there for entertainment purposes, but I also hear a lot from even people who don't go to those areas why we, as a state, made this decision. I'm not necessarily sure when the...when or how a conscious decision was made, but constantly asking whether we should be looking at it also because of the possibility of lost revenue. I believe Senator Beutler's amendment with Senator Janssen's amendment attached gives the voters a very good choice to make on the ballot and that we should allow them to have that choice. I haven't participated in any discussions on the floor before on gaming issues. It hasn't been an area that I've spent a lot of time on. But I am reacting to what I believe is a public interest and a very high public interest at this point in time in people having options on the ballot to look at in terms of the direction they want the state to go, and I think they deserve that opportunity. And I think, between now and the election, there will be ample debate beyond our Chambers where people will have lots of information to make those kinds of decisions. But I think it's important we, as a Legislature, work through this bill, work...or, excuse me, work through this LR and present something to the public that they can make a choice from. I think that's critical in our point...at this