

SENATOR HALL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, members. Again, some folks have asked, well, could you run this through one more time and I will try to do that. Currently what is happening is that the department has allowed for these video keno machines to be used on an experimental basis. They have been for at least a month in two locations, one being Ralston, one being LaVista, and they have been extremely popular. I do not oppose the machines in those settings. The department has proposed some language that, or some modifications, excuse me, that would change the way the machines operate. It would slow them down, it would not have the ticket generated at the machine itself, they would not be able to, as Senator Schmit pointed out, be able to pile up credits or replays, and those things are in the process of being modified by the manufacturers of those machines. My purpose is, for offering this amendment is to raise the whole issue of the use of these machines to begin with. I'm, again, not opposed to the machines. You don't bring in a video lottery bill for the state and stand up and argue against machines, but I do argue against the issue of where we're going to end up down the road once these are in place. They clearly are going to be used, I'll guarantee you, if they're allowed through modification or whatever form, they are going to be used in Douglas County in Omaha. I wouldn't be surprised if there is already a few messages on my desk downstairs because this amendment now is about 20 minutes old, but you're going to see folks band together, and I'm not saying that that probably isn't a bad idea, but if you think about what was proposed on the ballot this summer in terms of the video lottery proposal and bringing entities together to raise revenue by having small communities run a joint video keno operation, that's what is going to happen here. That's where these machines fit in. That's how they will be used and they will forever, in my opinion, foreclose the state from getting into this type of operation. We have yet to even discuss the lottery proposal as it has been introduced. It's sitting on General File and it's coming up, and I think that if we don't pay attention to what is taking place in this area in the local option lottery proposals that are on-line currently and operating, we are going to find that we are again not only behind the power curve, but we're going to be a weak sister at best and there will be very little benefit or reward to be reaped from establishing a statewide lottery. I would argue we're ten years behind now as Iowa moves to reduce the age of those who can gamble on their riverboats today in the Senate.