

SENATOR SMITH: No, but we were having a dialogue. We were having a dialogue and that was all right. But...but I do want...I want it very clear where I'm coming from. And I have some sympathy for those people and, in fact, have supported them as much as I could in the past but I can't support them to the point where I would say in the Constitution of Nebraska, we're going to, in our gambling issue that we're dealing with here, we're going to set aside some special money for this group of people. I would...I will oppose the amendment.

SENATOR LANDIS: We will move to Senator Schimek. Senator Schimek, you are recognized as the next speaker.

SENATOR SCHIMEK: Thank you, Mr. President, and members of the body, I am going to give some of my time to Senator Beutler. And I'm not going to address the legal issues here because I think Senator Beutler can do that very well. I'm not going to try to address the moral issues because we have had this discussion on this floor so many times and spent so many hours having that discussion. I guess what I would like to address is just the process here and why I think that we should allow this amendment on this. First of all, Senator Hall said a while ago that LR 24CA doesn't endorse video lotteries when he was speaking about Senator Smith's amendment. Well, I would just like to say to you that this amendment that Senator Beutler has introduced doesn't endorse payback to Commonwealth. It merely permits, it's permissive language. The fight would really be a couple of years from now. It would not be really until after the constitutional amendment were passed by the people and the trailer bill would not address this this year. Some of the people, I think, on the floor are opposing this, not necessarily because they oppose payback to Commonwealth depositors, although some of them may be, but I think it's more that they are afraid of what might happen to the lottery proposal itself if this is tacked on. Quite frankly, I think that there will be a pick-up of some people, like myself, who do not support the lottery but feel that this is the right thing to do if we can get the amendment on the ballot to at least give these depositors one more chance. And I suppose that many of those pick-ups might be in Lincoln. You know, my own district, I had over 350 surveys come back to me that said the people in my district do not support the lottery, amazing as that may seem. It was close. It was very close but there were not a majority who favored it. And so I'm not sure that people in Lincoln per se favor lotteries, at least not by maybe some of the bigger margins that