

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Smith. Senator Schmit.

SENATOR SCHMIT: Mr. President and members, I support the advancement of LR 24CA for reasons given by Senator Smith and others. I don't think it is going to make much difference because by the time the people approve the lottery and we implement it, that it will be pretty much a decided question because there will have been so many local option lotteries established by that time that the state is not going to get a very large piece of the action. I'd suggested that the state ought to cut themselves a little larger piece of the pie out of the keno operation. I think that would be a more productive system right now. I do want to comment on a couple of items that were brought up this morning. Number one, that the lottery taxes those least able to afford it. Well, ladies and gentlemen, some of those same people, who are saying that, are the ones who supported LB 773, and I tried to point out at that time that it was a regressive tax, but, nonetheless, it passed this Legislature. We came back the next year very apologetically and tried to correct some of that problem, and we never did totally correct it. The idea that we do away with the work ethic, well, I don't think that that is going to make much difference if we pass the lottery or not. I don't think anyone is going to quit their job because they bought a lottery ticket. Third, I think the thing that discourages people more than anything about the entire process is that great big chunk that comes out of your check that they don't ever see when they get their first paycheck. My children, as they all entered the workforce, had a very real taste of economics when they got their first paycheck and came home and said, Dad, what are all those deductions for? And I said that is to pay my salary partly, and also the salaries of other loyal public employees. They didn't really appreciate that. They would have preferred, I think, to have spent their money themselves. When we realize that today because of the cost of government, more than 50 percent of our money is taken away from each of us and spent by someone other than ourselves, I think that we know better than anyone else what really discourages people from the work ethic. It is because the more you work the bigger the bite, and the more insatiable seems to be the cost of government. I don't think we are going to solve any of the major problems of government with the enactment of a lottery, but if it does give someone the chance to buy a ticket from time to time, maybe that isn't all bad. I would hope that you would advance the bill. As I said, I don't think it is going to do much good because it