

constituents, throughout Omaha, when I mentioned the fact that the lottery proceeds are going to definitely go to education, because there is a strong feeling about it, and that is the only reason I came up with my amendment because they were furious. They said why? Property tax in Omaha and all through this state is so high, if anything, why don't we try to come up with something in the legislature to relieve the property tax situation, and maybe come back and let education and local government come in here and fight and try to get some of the lottery funds through the General Fund, rather than earmarking any amount, whether it is 5 percent, 10 percent, or 50 percent, even though, like I said, I was very tempted to vote for Senator Smith's amendment and Senator Lynch's because it would have gone to the CHIP program. Those failed. Now we are back to 50 percent for both the education and then for the Legislature to decide where 50 percent goes. I say wait for the next amendment, vote for it, and then 100 percent would go to the General Fund, and then those organizations would have to come in in front of either the Appropriations Committee or in a committee hearing and fight for a percentage of any of those funds, and you put it on the ballot in that fashion, I guarantee you it will pass. But when you start earmarking again to education, people are going to remember what happened on 1059. They were supposed to get a reduction in their property tax, and how many have you talked to lately that said their property tax went up, or it went down \$14, or \$12, in some cases none at all, and so I am asking you now to reject this amendment and vote for the very next amendment, and let the Legislature and the committee in public hearings or the Appropriations Committee decide and then, eventually, the entire Legislature where the money from the lottery is going to go. Thank you very much.

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Labeledz. Senator Withem.

SENATOR WITHEM: Yes, Mr. Speaker, members of the body, first, I would like to correct some statements that Senator Labeledz just made that I don't believe were entirely accurate. First of all, anybody that followed the votes, the campaign on the lottery issue during the election, the question of that money being earmarked for veterans was such a small portion of the public debate, to stand on this floor and claim that it was voted down because it was earmarked is ludicrous. The reason that lottery issue lost was because it wasn't a state lottery. It was a scheme to institutionalize video machines and had really nothing to do with the state lottery. The earmarking question had