

be a little schizophrenic when it comes to gaming issues. What we've done is we've been very careful as we legalize different types of gaming over the years that essentially the only people that we allow to do gaming are charitable nonprofit entities like the people that we allow to play bingo and use pickle cards and local subdivisions. So, essentially, we keep gambling away from any for-profit entity. We allow only those entities to use gaming that will use the proceeds of it for what we deem to be purposes that are very beneficial to the community and to the state. Then what we've done historically is we've turned around and we have taxed the proceeds from this gaming at confiscatory levels. We have a bingo tax currently that is at 8 percent of gross proceeds that is, if I'm not mistaken, the highest bingo tax in the nation. It's down from 10 percent a few years ago. We give 2 percent of the bingo tax to the cities of the State of Nebraska, who have absolutely nothing to do with enforcement of anything with respect to bingo. They just get a gift of 2 percent every year. I intend to bring legislation next session to address that. In the area of pickle cards we've done much the same thing. We've had extremely high gross proceeds taxes until legislation that passed a couple years ago where we at least started taking pickle card proceeds on the basis of the net, which only makes sense, and now we're going down the same road in the area of keno. We only allow local subdivisions which are not-for-profit entities to engage in keno. We've increased the tax from 2 percent of gross proceeds to 4 percent and now we're talking about another 2 percent. I think we need to make the policy decision that either we're going to tax gaming heavily and allow a lot of different entities to do it that are making money and can afford to pay the tax or we need to be very careful about the entities that we allow to conduct gaming and then use tax rates that are reasonable. I'm not objecting to the state taking a cut because the state does have regulatory duties. It is an activity that the state is allowing to go on and I think it's reasonable to put a tax on it. I don't think it's reasonable to keep upping that tax as a short-term answer to any budget ideas that we might have. I would oppose the Moore amendment.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Will. Does anyone else wish to speak to this amendment? Seeing none, do you have closing, Senator Moore?

SENATOR MOORE: Yes, Madam President, obviously the issue of a public hearing is one that certainly is raised when convenient,