

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Thank you, Senator Pedersen. I'm now finding where the amendment was that the page number listed originally was page 2030 so I'm just now finding it, but maybe I can engage you in a little discussion. What exactly is the purpose? Did such an operation...wait a minute, let me ask it this way. Has...are you creating this operation or did it already exist?

SENATOR PEDERSEN: The operation already existed. All we are adding to the operation itself is setting up criteria for license...for certifying counselors in compulsive gambling and then doing the certification of them.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Why are you adding more money and doing what it is that you're doing?

SENATOR PEDERSEN: Because you're going to have to have more help in working with...in doing the certification. You have to set up criteria for it first of all, Senator Chambers, and then you have to do the business of sending out the certification, making sure people got their...received their credits or their continuing education units.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: And this certification is for counselors?

SENATOR PEDERSEN: For compulsive gambling counselors.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Are there going to be more such counselors created?

SENATOR PEDERSEN: We...oh, yes, there's going to be quite a few more. We've only got a small handful now in the state and they are certified under a national organization which is more to the service organization of compulsive gambling, it's not hooked up with any government at all.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Why will you need more such counselors?

SENATOR PEDERSEN: Because we have more gambling going on in the state and a lot more gambling coming in from our neighboring states.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Have you done any of this kind of counseling?

SENATOR PEDERSEN: I am not certified as a gambling counselor,