

just thought I'd bring this up.

SENATOR COORDSEN: Thank you, Senator Janssen. Senator Will.

SENATOR WILL: Thank you, Mr. President, members of the body. I just wanted to sound a note of caution in that it's easy discussing an issue of this type to fall into the trap of using the extreme examples of what can go wrong as a, as evidence that, to be used to vote against something like this. You know it's...we've heard several, several examples that people brought up of specific individuals who have had problems gambling, that has led them into economic, social, personal ruin. And, obviously, those cases occur now, they're going to occur whether we...whatever we do with this, they are always going to be cases out there like that. There are number of activities like that that cost society in the end because of the way that people abuse them. I mean people abuse alcohol. Alcohol, though, is legal in this state. And it's something that we've accepted, the cost that may come with that. There are other activities that are even nonaddictive activities that end up...tobacco is another addictive activity, obviously, that I think the cost of tobacco consumption in the state probably dwarf anything that would come from the, from the legalization of gambling. Yet we do not make the use of tobacco products illegal. We allow people to decide for themselves, if they're of a certain age, whether they choose to use tobacco products or not. And I think we do make those choices as a Legislature and as a society that there are products, there are activities out there that, that have achieved a degree of acceptance where we allow people to make their own choices regarding those activities. There are, there are non, I guess you would call, normally, nonaddictive activities that also cause problems. Some people have problems with food that probably do reach the level of an addiction, with shopping, with spending money. There are all sorts of things. But we, as a society, have decided that those are activities that we are going to allow the individual to decide his or her course of action when it comes down to them, even though in the end there may be societal costs. So I think that's something to bear in mind. Take a step back from the specific debate about casinos, about slot machines, about whatever, and decide and take a look at the fact that there comes a time when it makes sense to let people decide for themselves if there's an activity that they want to take part in. And I think that's what we're talking about when we're talking about LR 43. This is something