

People have brought up points that there are large monied interests that are trying to twist our arms and so forth. I have not encountered that. In fact, on the contrary. I've had different civic leaders, one in particular, talk about, well, I won't support you for election. I'm, you know, we're going to talk about drying up some of your funds if, unless you try to stop this gambling. In my own situation, my own predicament I, you know, I'm bucking the trend as far as when you talk about money being thrown around and interests and so forth. So I haven't encountered that. If other people have, you know, that's their own situation. But I have not encountered that and I don't want the impression to be given to our Nebraskans that are watching that there are some big monied interests saying, you know, change your mind and we'll give you money. That's not happening, at least not to me, not to this senator. Maybe they know better. We do need to expand gambling to the extent that at least it would allow our charitable organizations to remain competitive. That's what I hear when I go door to door. That's what I hear when I do visit the clubs and so forth. This is something that they've always wanted. This is something that would allow them to compete in this environment that we have. Someone that I admire, an educator, once said we must deal with the world as it is and not as we would have it to be. And the world as it is is that Nebraska is surrounded by expanded gambling interests, and we have a decision to make, are we going to compete or not to compete. If you choose not to compete with the casinos and so forth by putting casinos, at least allow our charitable organizations to compete. Someone also said that, well, we could have bake sales and so forth. In the situation of a fraternal organization, when people go to Iowa, they also go to Iowa to dine, they go to Iowa to socialize and so forth, and it takes them out of our fraternal organization clubs. So we're not just losing membership and the frequency in our clubs and so forth, and we're having a hard time supporting our budgets because of gambling, but what also gambling does, it pulls them away. I'm firmly convinced that if we allow expanded gambling to the extent to allow our charitable organizations and veterans' organizations to compete, that Iowa will be damaged. I think that those boats are portable for a reason.

SENATOR COORDSEN: Time. Sorry about...

SENATOR HILGERT: No problem.