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SENATOR SCHIMEK: Thank you. Mr. President and members of the body, I would like to open on this bill by first posing some of the questions that I think that we need to think about as we are considering this whole gambling issue. And that will be both on this bill and on Senator Janssen's bill, LR 11CA. First question I think that we should ask ourselves is, does the Legislature need to put a constitutional amendment on the ballot on which the people can vote? And I'm just having passed out for you something that some of you saw last year, but I want to reemphasize what I think are the dangers of gaming on the ballot by petition. And there are a couple of things that I would like to point out to those of you particularly who weren't here last year. If we don't have something on the ballot this next time around, I believe there will be something on the ballot by petition. I don't doubt that for a single moment. What we had last year and what is now before the United...or the Nebraska Supreme Court being decided upon whether or not it violated the single subject was a petition that would have allowed a total maximum of up to 323,600 slots across the state. And I think that there actually even was a provision that communities could exceed the limitation, and so that might have even made it higher. The other thing that I want you to note is on the back of the sheet where it talks about legislative restrictions. And that petition provided that no action by the Legislature would be required for communities to use this article of the constitution or for a gaming commission to operate. In other words, we would have had no oversight over this. It would have also said that the Legislature cannot put any special or excise tax on the activities, and that no player activated gaming devices could be authorized by the Legislature. We couldn't have even authorized anything if we wanted to according to the provisions of this particular petition. I could go on and on about that petition, and you can read it for yourself, and refresh your memory if you have any doubts about whether this is good public policy or not. So if we don't want something like this to be on the ballot next time, or if we want to at least put something else on the ballot to counteract or to give the people a choice in what the policy should be, then I think that we need to act during this session. Now the issue doesn't go on the ballot until 2004, but the reason I think that we should act this session is on the off chance, and I think it's a very slim