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FLOOR DEBATE

February 26, 2003 LR 14

SPEAKER BROMM: Thank you, Senator Bourne. Senator Erdman.

SENATOR ERDMAN: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, members of the Legislature. Hold onto your seats, I rise in opposition to LR 14CA. I know, I know, it's hard to believe. As a member of the General Affairs Committee that, evidently, wasn't bright enough to vote for this proposal, if you ask Senator Schimek, I'm sure she won't use those words, but I was the lone no vote on both proposals that came before the Legislature. I think it's interesting, and I'm going to go through what Senator Schimek asked, and I'm going to give my perspective. But I'm going to listen because I think this is important that we, in the body, discuss what it is that's being presented to you. First of all, the comment that I made in committee is going to be what we hear, and I think Senator Bourne just alluded to that. We have competing proposals on the floor. We will have competing proposals on the floor until the day that this session either does away with these two proposals or puts one on the ballot or does whatever. We are going to continue to have that. We're going to continue to wade through notes from the back of ideas that we should be putting into our constitution. And so from that standpoint, I think that's going to be real evident. My comment was there will be a million interests, and I think each one of those interests is tied directly to a dollar. Senator Bourne talked about this, you know, we need to have money for Douglas County. That's essentially what his concern is. And this is going to be about money. This is going to be about how the state can generate revenue from individuals who are subject to gambling. Generally, it is going to target low-income, poor individuals, and we are going to set up a system in the state of Nebraska. We're going to take their money again from them and use it for other good and noble purposes. But I'm going to talk to the questions that Senator Schimek put up. Does the Legislature need to put this on the ballot; this being a constitutional amendment drafted by the Legislature before the people? Would it be more reasonable than an initiative that might be drafted by an outside interest group? I would say that answer would be yes as far as reasonability. Senator Bourne said that he thinks that if we would do this it might...it would prohibit, or that was the allusion, that this would prevent a bad proposal from being