

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
Transcriber's Office
FLOOR DEBATE

March 5, 2003

LR 11

play football. When the game...when the play was over, you had some of these guys that jumped on the pile after it was over, you know, and they called it piling on, so I learned my lesson then not to do it. But I'm going to do it anyways on the World-Herald here because, you see, the Star-Herald is owned by the World-Herald too. Star-Herald editorial comes out in opposition to gambling too, so I guess we can just throw out all these other...I mean, I'm sure that the editorial board of the Scottsbluff Star-Herald doesn't call down to Omaha and ask them what their opinion is when they write some of the stuff they do, because I guarantee some of the stuff they write probably wouldn't get printed in the World-Herald's editorial page, but I don't know how that works, so we'll just pile on. The debate that seems to be centered around here and, Senator Schrock, you know, can make an argument, whatever he would like, to try and justify the position before us, but going back to the numbers that Senator Smith talked about, I passed out a sheet entitled, "Impact of Casinos on Retail Sales in Iowa." This is retail sales and these are communities with populations between 20,000 and 50,000. This is between the years of 1996 and 2000, the prime time gambling years for Iowa, when they first got these casinos. Number one in increased retail sales was Ames, city of Ames, no casino around there, almost a 7 percent increase in retail sales. You go all the way down the list and the lowest one that doesn't have a casino was 2.7 percent. The bottom four communities there, one of them lost retail sales and that was Burlington, Iowa. That has a casino. Bettendorf was zero percent. They've got a casino. So in the communities that didn't have a casino that weren't in the larger communities were actually a detriment to the community that they lived in because they were actually deterring the retail sales in the community, which I would have to think would have a negative impact on the businesses, which have a negative impact on the tax base, which would have a negative impact on schools. You just go down the line. So I wanted to make sure that that was clear and that you have that information. That way you can say, well, this was said but we have no proof. There's the proof, directly from the state of Iowa's Department of Revenue. I think what I've heard today has been encouraging, for me at least. I've heard Senator Price speak. I've even heard Senator Combs speak. Welcome to the fray. It is a good discussion and I think it's important