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FLOOR DEBATE

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expanded gambling. Some of the assertions are refutable, but others I accept. A casino in Omaha certainly would keep in Nebraska gambling dollars that otherwise would go across the Missouri River, but gambling is not a stable engine of economic development, nor is it a reliable source of tax revenue. I hope no one is still under the mistaken expression that expanded gambling is the answer to the state budget crisis. Yet, I support putting on the ballot an amendment to allow expanded gambling. I'm aware that, like alcohol, gambling can damage those who overindulge, but this is the issue--gambling is going to expand because the public wants it to expand. If the Legislature does not supervise it, then the people will take matters into their own hands. They already tried. The video slot petition was an attempt to create a wide-open gambling regime outside the control of a Legislature with which the public had become frustrated. The petition seems to have been derailed by drafting flaws, but the people will keep pushing for expanded gambling as surely as they did term limits. I voted against term limits, but we operate by majority rule. I might vote against expanded gambling on the ballot, but I want something on the ballot because if there is to be expanded gambling I want it under the control of the Legislature. I don't want to leave a void to be filled by who knows what, and that's what almost happened last summer. That concludes the "Pulse" letter and that pretty much...

SENATOR HARTNETT: One minute, Senator Maxwell.

SENATOR MAXWELL: Thank you, Mr. President. And, as I said, I think it applies to the editorial today because, as Senator Schimek pointed out, apparently the editorial's contention is don't pretend that the main issue isn't revenue; the main issue here is revenue. I say the main issue is not revenue and I hope, as I said in my letter, I hope no one is still under the mistaken impression that this is some kind of an answer to our budget problem. The issue is who is going to control expansion of gambling in Nebraska, and I think it should be the Legislature. Thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR HARTNETT: Thank you, Senator Maxwell. The speaking order is Schimek, Chambers, Aguilar, Kremer, Brown, Stuhr, and