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what...eventually what we're asking for this body to do is to allow the people of the state of Nebraska the opportunity to decide whether they want expanded gambling in this state. And by whatever means it takes to get it there, other by...other than by the ugly petition that is out there right now, that, listen, if we don't do something, that is going to happen. It might happen anyway. But I have an amendment a little later on that is going to clarify a little bit of that, if we do get this on the ballot and the petition also reaches the ballot. That can be corrected with an amendment I have a little later. And we talk about the terrible atrocities and the problems that are caused by the casinos across the river. Everyone has to say "across the river." You realize that the retail sector in Council Bluffs also has seen the impact of casinos. Retail sales grew by 11.75 percent between 1997 and 1999, nearly double the state average. Per capita annual income increased in Pottawattamie County by nearly \$2,000 a year since 1996 to 1997.

SENATOR VRTISKA: One minute.

SENATOR JANSSEN: There...a lot of that is because of the increased, as they say, tourism in the area. It also increased growth in that city. I've got a lot of things in this book to talk about, what has happened in Council Bluffs. The vice president of finance, Ameristar Casino, said that jobs provided by the casino industry have helped hundreds of employees buy their first home. Some of the development caused concern. Some wondered whether Council Bluffs-Omaha area could support 400 extra hotel rooms. Hoffman (phonetic) said that he doesn't think it is a coincidence that more hotels began building and opening in downtown Omaha...

SENATOR VRTISKA: Time.

SENATOR JANSSEN: ...after the boats opened. Thank you.

SENATOR VRTISKA: Thank you, Senator Janssen. The next speaker is Senator Erdman.

SENATOR ERDMAN: Thank you, Senator Vrtiska, members of the Legislature. I rise in opposition to AM1146. And I have also