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FLOOR DEBATE

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well, Omaha already has it, and I believe that there would be information that would say that that tax is largely paid by out-of-state visitors. But the lodging tax in the next largest area, being Lancaster County, specifically Lincoln, I would argue is paid largely by Nebraskans and this tax would cost Nebraskans a lot more money. And I reference up to eight football game weekends that fills up hotels. I reference the state volleyball tournament, state swimming meet, state wrestling tournament, girls state basketball, boys state basketball, girls state tennis, boys state tennis. These are Nebraskans paying for lodging, in large part many times with public funds, and that doesn't include constituents of mine that travel all the way in from the Panhandle and have to spend money on lodging, whether it's public or private, but I would emphasize the public nature as well, and the tax goes up. And I just have some reservations with that and that's why I offer AM1143 as a compromise. And I will vote for LB 726 with the amendment, but I cannot without the amendment, and I simply offer this to the body for consideration because I think we can...we can meet in the middle. Thank you.

SPEAKER BROMM: Thank you, Senator Smith. Senator Schimek.

SENATOR SCHIMEK: Yes, thank you, Mr. President and members. I understand where Senator Smith is coming from and I am somewhat I guess...no, I'm not sympathetic to his efforts. (Laugh) I don't think we should support this. I, you know, either we believe in local control or we don't believe in local control, and I think in most arenas we do. I don't know why we would make an exception for this arena, and so I would just encourage you to vote in opposition to the Smith amendment. Thank you.

SPEAKER BROMM: Thank you, Senator Schimek. Senator Beutler.

SENATOR BEUTLER: I would also encourage you to vote against the amendment. Douglas County, as you may recall, already has 2 percent. I can see no logical reason why Douglas County should...that their local government is somehow more trustworthy than anybody else's, that if they can be trusted with a 2 percent prerogative, up to 2 percent, I think all other counties should have the same prerogative. And, secondly, the