

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
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FLOOR DEBATE

April 29, 2003 LB 407

introduced.) On with discussion of the motion to bracket LB 407. Senator Chambers, followed by Senator Schimek.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Mr. President and members of the Legislature, I'm going to recapitulate. Now somebody should have called me on that. I'm going to reiterate what I had said. When I said recapitulate, everybody should have gone up in a shout, and if they had of I would have sat down and quit, because that would have meant they were paying attention. Senator Schimek read from the Nebraska Constitution. We all know that the primary duty of this Legislature is to provide for public schools. We are going to cut the university's money. The flagship university of this state, regardless of how you feel about it, that is our primary responsibility. Other campuses associated with the NU system are going to be cut and people are in a turmoil. They're not just going to wonder whether they can go to school. Some are going to lose their jobs. But I don't hear people standing on this floor crying about the people who will lose their jobs, therefore, we're not going to cut the university so that those kind of decisions will have to be taken. The chancellor at NU has had to consider taking action which some deem so drastic that there were faculty members who wanted to undertake to provide or obtain a vote of no confidence in this man because he is doing what the Legislature's decisions will force him to do. Whoever was in that position would be faced with similar decisions. You're going to cut the university. Why? You've got plenty of money, Dr. Johnson. You can give money to private schools, so that means you're taking care of your primary responsibilities. Why do some people speak against gambling, Senator Aguilar? I wish Senator Jensen were here and paying attention. Senator Jensen will say don't allow gambling because people who gamble will take money away from their kids and their family and not pay their bills. Well, Senator Jensen, we're not able to pay our bills in terms of not cutting the university. That's our primary responsibility. Yet, we're going to give free money to those where we have no responsibility. So how can gamblers be condemned on the one hand, based on that principle of not taking care of your primary responsibility and diverting money elsewhere, but when it comes here to our primary responsibility to the public schools we will cut them but divert money to private schools where we have no