

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

February 4, 2004 LR 14

on the Louden amendment.

SENATOR SCHIMEK: Thank you, Mr. President and members. I really am hoping that we don't have to spend hours and hours and days and days on this issue. We have done that over the years, some people would say ad nauseam and I would agree with them. I think that one of the reasons, Senator Louden, that I introduced the amendment that I did is so we don't have to have these wrangles. What we...what we do is we make the language permissive, basically, and then we come back another day and let any entity that wants to make its argument to a gaming commission or whatever kind of entity that we set up, and then they have to come to the Legislature for approval. Now, I know that the Mountain time line is just outside of North Platte, between North Platte and Ogallala, and that is basically about the western third of the state. I would...I would just make that conclusion. But there is a very low population base in that western third of the state. I'm not sure what you're talking about when you say casino, and I'm not sure what any of us are talking about when we say casino. But I really don't think we're probably going to have more than one or two major casinos in this state. I don't think the market will bear more than one or two. And you're not going to get a casino to come in and build just anywhere. They're going to...they're going to want to do it where the population base is. Now if you're talking about something smaller, and I presume you probably are, then that needs to be further defined, and that I think takes a lot of work and a lot of research as to what we would allow. I don't think that we want to say...your language does say "shall," Senator. It says there shall be three in that Mountain time zone. So it's not...it's not making a suggestion. It's telling us that there would be. And if we're going to start adding back detail into this amendment then we're absolutely going to go nowhere. I think that it's the...it's the devil is in the details, of course, and what we need to do is we need to put something before the people that says, basically, do you or do you not want casino gaming in this state. And if you look at what's happening, now I just got a copy of an initiative petition that was filed yet this morning and this was a very short petition filed by a Richard, I can't read his last name, Bellino, I believe, and he is suggesting that the Legislature