

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

February 4, 2004 LR 14

let's give them a chance. Let them vote on it, let them pick. And if they happen to choose casino gambling, let's give them a well-crafted constitutional amendment that makes sense. With that, I will return the rest of my time to the Chair. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Mines. Senator Baker, on the Smith amendment.

SENATOR BAKER: Thank you, Senator Cudaback and members. I have not spoken on this issue, I know, this session, and I think I may have spoke last year on it. But I'm not a proponent of gambling, expanded gambling. I just...I don't support it, but I think we owe it to our citizens to put a decent proposal out in front of them. I agree with Senator Mines totally. If we don't do this, the people out there opposing this constitutional amendment better be careful; they may get what they want. If we don't put a decent proposal on the ballot, then we're going to have to live with all these other things out there that I don't like at all. And I'll tell you right now, I'm going to try and convince my people in my district not to vote for expanded gambling. But I think we owe it to them to put a decent proposal out there. And people have said, what would it take to get me on board? I said, a simple thing that doesn't clutter up the constitution with a whole bunch of words, we have control over it, and finally that's what we have in front of us. So I look at past experience of what's happened to this body and inaction when they did not provide the leadership to the state. We have Initiative 300 out there, and most of us in the body now were not here then, but we did not provide the leadership we needed. There was a crying need to do something out there when we did nothing. What did we end up with? We ended up with I-300 out there that's just a mess, a disaster. Can we change it? Sure we can change it. We have to propose another constitutional amendment and convince the people to do it. So the other issue out there is term limits. We did nothing to address people's concerns, citizens' concerns on term limits, and look what happened. We got it in the constitution, and now we can't do anything with it but provide another constitutional amendment. And I don't want to get into that situation a third time. The public out there in my district said, we want to vote