

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

February 19, 2004 LR 14

that if the funding mechanism weren't so enticing, they would rather do without it. But they've not only become addicted to gambling; they've become addicted to the revenues. But nonetheless, when we talk about the basic economics, in studies performed by independent groups, they don't have a predisposition on the political issues of the day, whether liberal, conservative, or voting for expanded gambling because they feel the pressure, whatever the case might be, but these independent groups have said that there are limited economies. And when you bring in gambling, that takes money from Main Street, from retail, that already, I would argue, is struggling across Nebraska, especially rural Nebraska, and puts it into casinos. Now, does the money stay in Nebraska from the casinos? No. And that's what I find particularly offensive about the petition measures that are going around calling themselves "keep the money in Nebraska." That's not true, because all sorts of vendors relating to gambling are out of state. They make a huge chunk. In fact, I was looking at a report the other day that was brought to me by a constituent who isn't predisposed politically, where it shows a chart that Nebraska for the administration of the lottery is number one across the United States, at about 26 percent of our lottery revenues going to the administration. I want to confirm that. I found it so unbelievable that I'm wanting to confirm that. But certainly, it's relevant to the issue when we talk about gambling dollars and where they go. They're not going to come to the State Capitol building necessarily. They won't even go to the Department of Revenue at the State Office Building necessarily. They're going to go to other places that are going to be writing checks every election time to candidates supportive of their case. Now, I know that Senator Beutler has worked on keeping money out of politics. I would say the best way to keep money out of politics is to say no to casino gambling in Nebraska. Because as I've noted before, we have gambling in Nebraska, very explicitly so, with racetracks, with keno. I still don't know why people play keno. It just doesn't look very exciting to me, but it generates funds; so be it: the lottery, pickle cards. But what I, again, find offensive about expanded gambling in Nebraska is a group of people wanting to get together down the street one evening a week, play a little poker,...