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FLOOR DEBATE

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SENATOR SCHIMEK: Yes, thank you. Mr. President and members, I think, Senator Jones, you just made a good argument for passing something on this floor because then we can come back here and work out all the details, which I think it's rather difficult to do in a constitutional amendment. I really want to talk about the amendment and the strategy here, but I also want to respond to a couple of other comments that were made; one, I believe by Senator Jones regarding South Dakota. And it is true, South Dakota has had second thoughts about the gambling that they have allowed up there because what they've done is they've allowed it everywhere. And they have allowed the most addictive form of gambling, and they've put it into their General Funds. So now they can't get along without it. That would be the worst thing in the whole world that we could do here in Nebraska or any other state. It should never go into our General Funds. It should be handled differently. I also would like to remind you that over in Iowa, they have had, in the counties where they have casinos and racetracks, they have had a vote on whether they think they should be retained or not. And by anywhere from 63 to 81 percent, depending on the county, those voters said, yes, they like what it's doing for their communities. They like what it's doing in terms of revenue. And all of this stuff that I keep seeing that floats around here about how awful it would be for Nebraska, I mean, the mayor of Council Bluffs in a news article last year said how great it was for his city. They're doing fantastic things over there. So the one thing that they are not doing over in Iowa, I believe, is putting it into their General Funds, and that's the way it should be. It should never go into the General Funds. It should be for all kinds of other extras. But I guess at this point, I really am torn because I like the idea of fewer casinos, but I've only heard one person who has gotten up on this floor, who has had questions about the eight casinos, say he could vote for the one and he could vote for the bill at one. And he even voted for the eight casinos last time on that go-around. I haven't...I don't see any votes being picked up here and, in fact, there would be votes lost. And we have been through this again and again and again. That's the dilemma. That's why we wanted finally to establish a permissive kind of amendment that says up to and we could come back on this floor and argue next year and never authorize one single casino. It could happen. On the other hand, ten years