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be...will be a majority of votes cast to expand some type of gambling in the state of Nebraska, as much as I would hate to really see it. But, you know, we're only a few votes here and we can't control the wishes of the registered voters in the state of Nebraska. So these are the things that really concern me as to, you know, what...are we prepared if something would pass when we do not have anything on the ballot? That does concern me. And I'll return the balance of my time to the Chair.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Stuthman. Senator Smith.

SENATOR SMITH: Thank you, Mr. President and members. I failed to mention at the very onset of this debate that when I was elected in 1998 and came to this body January of 1999, I was not that interested in the gambling issue. I'll admit, I've dropped a few coins in a slot machine. I know others who have in a responsible manner. Not a single one of them says it's Nebraska's right to have slot machines down the street or down the road or down the interstate. But I've seen the information that's come to this body. I've sat through public hearings with two years on the General Affairs Committee listening to the information, and as I've said twice before just this morning, research, after research, after research shows that expanded gambling, and especially slot machine gambling is bad for the economy of Nebraska. Something that I hadn't thought of before now, but that is that casinos could come in and look for a blighted area and qualify for tax increment financing--basically, a tax break for creating jobs in a blighted area. Is that what our body wants? Is that what the people of the state of Nebraska want are tax advantages for Las Vegas-based casinos coming to this state? No. Is that possible given the passage of this? Yes. I think that it all goes back to statistics. The profile of a casino gambler: People 65 and older make up a little more than 23 percent of all casino gamblers. This is according to the American Legion Magazine, which I would have to speculate that is a pretty balanced entity when it comes to gambling because they themselves engage in just a little bit of gambling. But, nonetheless, about 34 percent are in the 31 to 50-year-old bracket, edging out the 51 to 64 group everywhere except at