

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

February 23, 2004 LR 14

of the petitions that are coming along. We have some that are so extreme. And I will submit to you that if we have the four different efforts that are moving, with multiple parts to each issue, or for each group, we're going to have a pummeling of the electorate. And let's say we're number five, because I'm not convinced that if we do something the other four will go away. Or maybe, Senator Janssen, let's say there are three--ours, the Legislature's, and then two others that are moneyed and Vegas is able to buy their way onto the ballot by way of our effort or the petition effort. But let's just say that there are three. Again, the voters will be pummeled with vote for this one over that one; vote for parts five, six and seven, not one, two, three, or nine, ten, and eleven. And how easy it would be for all of antigamblers, all the antigamblers, anticasinors, I should say, because I...there will be an element of folks who are out to protect pickle cards, who are out to protect keno as we know it, who are out to protect bingo as we know it, who have all suffered with the lottery, by the way, but how easy it would be for the coalition to form to promote a message of, vote no on everything, just go down the list, mark no, no, no, no, no. Now, LR 14CA is not going to have an embossed, engraved seal on it with the state of Nebraska. It's going to look a lot like the others. And certainly, if it's more broad and people are fearing casinos statewide, there is the issue that the Legislature's efforts will be less palatable to the public. Because I sense, at least in the body, that we don't want casinos on every corner.

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.

SENATOR SMITH: And we've seen what South Dakota has experienced, with literally a casino on almost every urban corner, and every other rural corner. And it creates problems. We know that. I've cited the research before, and I may need to do it again, because I believe it's convincing. As I stated before, I didn't come to this body in 1999 with the position that I have right now on gambling. I was maybe not quite neutral, but certainly a lot more open to ideas. And certainly, I felt a little bit more threatened by Council Bluffs than I do now. But the fact is, we don't have to join them in order to beat them. Thank you, Mr. President.