

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

March 4, 2004

LR 209

talks about these funds that says the Legislature is hereby prohibited from using these funds for any other purpose than that stated herein. Then you'd have to state--"herein" meaning the constitution--the specific use for the money. Mock me, laugh at me, pretend that what I say means nothing. If you pass this bill, you have not done anything except guarantee money to the State Fair unless the Legislature abolishes the State Fair.

SENATOR VRTISKA: Time.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Thank you, Mr. President.

SENATOR VRTISKA: Next speaker is Senator Thompson.

SENATOR THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. President, members of the body. Kind of like to track back to a thought I had when I ran out of time last time. And I think one of the things we have to do as members of the Legislature in considering this amendment is decide if \$2 million a year is enough to save the State Fair. In a 2000 report, one of the reports and discussions and things that we've had over the last few years--and I...this isn't an updated figure--the 2000 report said what was needed for a renovation of the fairground facilities. And those of you who have been out there know that some of the buildings are in disrepair, and we have issues that need to be done in terms of lighting and sidewalks and everything else. But we would need \$27 million. That's in a report from 2001, so it's year 2000, it's about four years old. But let's just say costs haven't gone up and we need \$27 million just to take care of bringing the facilities up to snuff. That's 14 years of the...at \$2 million a year, roughly, to pay for getting the facilities up to snuff. Now obviously, you can't...you'd say, well we won't do that all in one year. But there are so many needs in terms of advertising, bringing acts in, promoting the fair in a variety of ways. You know, we talk about what's important to put on the ballot, that the people, when we passed the lottery, thought it was for the education and environment, but now we're going to go back and say, well, can we add the State Fair also. Well, we have a responsibility when we do that to be able to say \$2 million a year will save the State Fair. The Governor is out trying to raise money privately for the State Fair. And the