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Omaha, to Scottsbluff, to all the rural areas and becomes again what it was at the beginning, a celebration of time and place and identifying ourselves as Nebraskans. Thank you.

SPEAKER BROMM: Thank you, Senator Beutler. Senator Thompson.

SENATOR THOMPSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, members of the body. I just want to go to another issue. Yesterday I talked about my concern of putting this on the ballot and the faith that we have to have with the people of Nebraska when we put something like this on the ballot for the reasons of shifting from why the lottery passed when it was said it was going to go for education and environment, and a concern about reducing those funds. And also a concern over whether or not saying \$2 million would be adequate to save the State Fair knowing that we have \$27 million worth of building projects that were identified in the year 2001 through 2000 figures, whether we will even get to being able to do what needs to happen, and maybe that we need to rethink whether or not and what type of State Fair we have. These are not new issues. As a Legislature, they've been debated since I got here in 1998, and we've had numerous studies. But the issue I want to bring up today is how we compare with other states, and we've been talking a little bit about that. This is because Program Evaluation Committee, as it was previously called, was charged with a study of the State Fair. A number of recommendations were made regarding governance, accountability, and other issues that we, as a Legislature, have taken up. And we do have some things that are improved in that regard and a staff I know that is extremely dedicated and have been kind enough to meet with me on numerous occasions. This is not a reflection on them. This is a reflection I think of what we have to look to as reality, and as stewards of the taxpayers' money, what we recommend to them that we do. And I'm just going to go back to this report. I know it's a few years old, but one of the things that it did look at was how we compared to other states and what was happening with their state fairs. And our research staff looked at our surrounding states and here is some of the findings from what this report said. To get an idea of the success of the fairs in the nine states, we asked each to provide us with attendance figures and the fair's annual profit or loss for the last five years. Based on the limited