

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

March 5, 2004

LR 209

to come to Lincoln. And I think that if you look at the committee that they have formed to try to put this State Fair event together, it's almost all Lincoln people; Lincoln realizing at a late date that they haven't been supporting the State Fair very well. And so I think that there are two primary groups of people that are...or three maybe, that want to continue the State Fair as it is. One of them is the agricultural group who would like this to be a state agricultural event but it plain isn't. The people, as you will note from articles that are written before, the people are coalescing around their own local county fairs and things of that nature. We have a series of buildings out there that are in a deplorable state. Kids used to come to the State Fair, bring their exhibits, and then it would rain and the exhibit would be destroyed by the water coming through the roof. The 309 Committee has had to try and patch that up, try and make it so it's usable at all, but the buildings are in a deplorable state. Two million dollars would leverage the ability to attempt to restore the State Fair, but it's going to take a tremendous amount of money to get that to be something that the people in this state would really like to support. I think that we really need to start looking seriously at what we put into our constitution. I'm very concerned about that. We have a number of items that have been put in by initiative petitions and they put them in the constitution. And you could name off which ones they are that were put there for the sole reason to put it out of the reach of the Legislature. So here now we have a constitutional amendment that's being proposed that would take money and give the money, the \$2 million, to an entity over which the state has absolutely no control. It's a private organization. We're going to give money...the only money that we would actually guarantee would go to somebody would be \$2 million to the State Fair to do whatever they wish and we have absolutely no control over that. It bothered me two years ago that we had no control over the State Fair, itself, and that if we're going to be giving money to the State Fair, it should be an agency of the state. But that was rejected because they wanted to have local control of that under the then existing board. But as a conclusion to my proposal that we make it a state agency, they restructured the board and many of the people who had been on there for time eternity went off of the board,