

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

March 5, 2004

LR 209

and they've tried to restructure it. I know that the current fair manager is trying very hard to put something together, but it's...what they're trying to do is to compare this to the Iowa State Fair. There is no comparison. The Iowa State Fair is of longstanding duration. It's a very going organization and I know the state puts money in it, but they're putting money in something that's alive. We're trying to build a State Fair. Essentially, you could say we almost don't have a State Fair now except in name, and I think that it is, if you look at the agricultural scene, and the people to whom agriculture is very important, it should be important to all of us, but those who are primarily engaged in agriculture want to maintain the idea that the State Fair exists as a part of our agricultural scene. But this has been diminishing and I would rather that we devote our money to those things that we know we have to do, that are core responsibilities, and that we not chase the memory of what a State Fair was or the anticipation of what a State Fair could be. I think we're facing tremendous financial obligations in this state.

SPEAKER BROMM: One minute.

SENATOR D. PEDERSON: We are facing the initial \$211 million deficit that we knew about, and then a few days ago we found out the other \$104 million that the Forecasting Board has determined that we need to resolve, so approximately \$315 million that we have to face this year. I do not think it's appropriate for us to take action at this time to deal with giving money to the State Fair. I didn't like the idea of giving money for the prizes. This should have been a perpetuating organization. It should have been built to where it had adequate income to keep itself going. And now the only way it can do it is by having the state dedicate \$2 million every year to keep the doors open. I think that's a very poor basis of amending our constitution to take away from the Legislature any control of this organization and to just take money that could go for education, could go for the environment, and as Senator Engel says, there are many uses of the environment money that really could be used for statewide interest.

SPEAKER BROMM: Time.