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FLOOR DEBATE

March 5, 2004

LR 209

we're about to take is whether or not we shall cease debate. All in favor of ceasing debate please vote aye, upon the roll call, and opposed vote nay. Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: (Roll call vote taken, Legislative Journal pages 887-888.) 32 ayes, 10 nays to cease debate, Mr. President.

SPEAKER BROMM: Debate does cease. I will raise the call and I recognize Senator Don Pederson to close on his bracket motion.

SENATOR D. PEDERSON: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. This is a serious matter, I recognize that. It's a serious one in two ways. Number one, the State Fair was hoping that this would be a way that they could fund its "ongoingness." But, number two, it's important for the state to decide...for us actually to decide whether we are willing to amend our constitution to give money to perpetuate the State Fair. I don't even think it will perpetuate the State Fair, but it is money that is badly needed in either education or in the environment and we are dedicating it, as I said before, to an organization over which we have absolutely no control. It was mentioned a little earlier that, why don't we repair those buildings out there at the State Fairgrounds? We have valuable buildings. We have the buildings. The State of Nebraska owns the land, owns the buildings. They've been under the management and care--question mark--of the previous state board, State Fair Board, and now under the current State Fair Board. They are in bad shape that would take a tremendous amount of money. Certainly, we don't have a plan at this moment for the use of those buildings or that land, but it could be utilized if it's no longer needed for the State Fair. If they do not receive this funding, this isn't the only means by which the State Fair could obtain funds. They could get corporate sponsorship. They could proceed in many other ways. But it's typical of organizations through the years, they come to the Legislature and say, we need money. They don't look at their own responsibilities in that respect first. They look to us and say, okay, we need more money. Let's go ahead, and you continue to perpetuate that. I don't think we can have business as usual in light of the economic crisis that this state has. I recognize that we're asking you