

TRANSCRIPT PREPARED BY THE CLERK OF THE LEGISLATURE
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FLOOR DEBATE

March 5, 2004 LR 209

CLERK: Mr. President, Senator Louden would move to amend the committee amendments with AM2828. (Legislative Journal page 824.)

SENATOR ENGEL: Senator Louden.

SENATOR LOUDEN: Thank you, Mr. President and members of the body. This amendment that I've amended to LR 209CA is moving the State Fair to the Western part of the state. The Nebraska State Fair has moved from a showcase of goods and services that was geared to sell to rural Nebraska and the nation. The trade and home show products show has decreased for several years. The shopping patterns have changed, along with the products. The State Fair is not a showcase for new agriculture products anymore. It has moved to a promotion of entertainment. I introduce this amendment to challenge us to think outside the box, and I'd offer a fresh look at a continuing problem. Does the fair have the support of the city of Lincoln and Lancaster County? Lancaster County constructed a new facility to promote their county fair. Was this done to showcase hand crafts, produce, and livestock from Lancaster County? For a fair to be successful, it must have the support of the community. The eastern third of Nebraska is becoming more reliant on a goods and services economy, with less interest in promoting agricultural products. The vendors of the trade shows have moved out because of the low attendance of farm and ranch people. Agriculture should be promoted where the main economy relies on farm and ranch production. The trade show of implements and farm machinery has moved west. Grand Island has Husker Harvest Days. This is becoming recognized nationally as the trade show to attend for farm and ranch equipment. The city of Grand Island gives its wholehearted support for the show. The cattle, the cattle show has moved west to Kearney. The Cattlemen's Classic is now the premier show for cattle in Nebraska. We have the potential of a new era for the Nebraska State Fair. The State Fair should be moved west. The Mitchell-Morrill-Scottsbluff people support these events. The Scotts Bluff County Fair is the largest in the western half of the state. Not only will the community support the fair, but also there are many other attractions in the area to enhance similar interests. The history of the Oregon Trail,