

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

March 8, 2004

LR 209

that once some additional funding was provided to that institution, things did begin to turn around. Last week I think I shared with you some facts about what some of the other states do provide. Kansas, in about seven years, provided \$27 million; that's about \$4 million a year. Iowa, about \$20 million; that's roughly about \$3 million. And in that entire seven years, I believe that Nebraska spent a little over \$1 million, about \$1.8 million possibly toward support of the fair. I think, and it's been mentioned before, one of the great things about the State Fair is the developing and motivating of our youth, and our youth are our future leaders in this state. The 4-H Program, we have over 120,000 young people and this is a culmination of, first, they go to the county fair, and then they look forward to not only demonstrating but bringing their livestock, whatever it might be, to the State Fair. So this is a wonderful opportunity and wonderful experiences. This should be a state event, and I think that is one thing that we certainly have fallen down on. I do think we have to bring the vision back to agriculture. It's a great opportunity. We talk about the lottery funds being spent for education and environment. Wonderful opportunity to educate others about the agriculture industry and the importance of it to our state. I do have some concern, as I shared earlier, about putting this into our constitution, but I will be supporting this amendment. I think it's time that the entire state get behind this effort and revive and bring back this great tradition that we have. Thank you, and I give the rest of my time back to the Chair.

**SPEAKER BROMM:** Thank you, Senator Stuhr. (Visitors introduced.) Senator Thompson.

**SENATOR THOMPSON:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker. Members of the body, what we...we need to get back beyond sentiment here and talk about what we're going to put on the ballot, if we choose to do this, for the voters to consider. And I believe when we put something on the ballot of this nature it should come with the backing for it that gets to the key issues here. And my concern is...there are several. One is we're going to divert money from education and the environment, which serves all Nebraskans, to \$2 million to the State Fair, which last year attracted 238,000 Nebraskans, and at its peak several years ago probably had, and