

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

April 7, 2004 LR 11

have some options as the votes come up. And I don't know quite what to expect and I guess that's the way the place works. I mean the Speaker has reserved the right to cease debate, perhaps prematurely, especially when we have a new amendment that was just filed yesterday, just yesterday. The amendment was filed that I would say, and I'll bet even the proponents would say, drastically changed the language of the casino amendments as it relates to petitions...initiatives, that according to the state constitution the initiatives are the first right of the people of the state of Nebraska. I didn't write it. That language has been in the constitution for quite some time. I'll find the year it was...it was put into the constitution. My guess is it's been around a good long time. But if you looked at the amendment before us, it says only the Legislature should have the right to regulate, authorize, tax, and I think there was one more, casino gambling, whether the Legislature put it on the ballot or initiative put it on the ballot. Loud-mouth Smith showed his card a little early in saying, you know, I think that raises issue with the initiative and referendum process here in the state of Nebraska. Now at first old Smith, loud-mouth Smith, was pooh-poohed by the proponents of casinos, saying Smith effectively doesn't know what he's talking about, but along came a new amendment striking that. How many of us have gone home to tell town hall meetings, what have you, that we might be supporting LR 11CA because the Legislature should have the ultimate authority on gambling? Now I would venture to say that that's been said across this great...

SENATOR CUDABACK: One minute.

SENATOR SMITH: ...across this great state of Nebraska, but let's think about it. Does the Legislature truly have control? Now maybe it didn't meet the intent of some to remove the initiative process from the gambling issue, but perhaps the letter of the amendment stated that and now we're changing. I don't know how long it will be before cloture is called. That's fine. I'll submit myself to the rules here and the options available to 25 members of the Legislature. If Senator Janssen and Senator Schimek want to call for 30 votes to suspend the rules to cease debate, I'm game. That's within the rules.