

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

April 7, 2004 LR 11

gaming. One thing that has been changed is language which raised concerns from the opposition regarding the initiative process, although I think the language, as Senator Schimek alluded to, was acceptable, but did not negatively affect the initiative process. The language was not essential and I didn't want the body to have to endure a lengthy debate on that issue. I believe that this is a reasonable approach. It would provide the people a more limited alternative to the initiative petition effort and I honestly...I believe they will be successful in getting that on a ballot this year. That was very evident from the lobbying we have had, very evident. The effort last year received enough signatures, but was stopped by the courts. We can't count on that happening again, and it won't. I believe that the people of this state want to vote on this issue. I, you know, in fact, I believe that they have wanted to vote for it for several years, and I can't say that the rest of the 48 members', in here, districts are any different than mine. That's all that I hear. They have shown, you know, they have shown us through surveys, letters that we get and signing petitions. I believe that it's time for the Legislature to take the leadership role on this issue. We talked this morning about allowing people to vote. You know, this I think is a sacred thing in this state that we have representative government. We should be able to decide these issues in here. That's what we're elected here to do is to do the will of the people, and the majority of the people in your district, if they want you to do this, then I think you should oblige, you should oblige them and give them that opportunity to do their constitutional right, and it's up to the Legislature to provide that for them to do or they will take it into their own hands. With that, Senator Cudaback, I believe that I covered just about everything on, you know, the argument was raised this morning and has been really, you know, repeatedly about what I just said that gaming cannot occur in Nebraska without a change in our constitution. I believe that if the body puts this on the ballot, it will get there without us. I don't know how many more times I have to say that. One of the petitions has a \$100 gaming license per location, slot machines in bars and restaurants across the state. I think that it's this body's responsibility to give people another option. A hundred dollars for a gambling license. Most of you know what a liquor license costs. That's