

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

April 7, 2004 LR 11

The idea that the county would have to pay for this is probably a little far-fetched as well, because I'm sure that the casino would be more than willing to pay the couple thousand dollars that it would cost for that county to have that election so they can continue to be in existence. Because after all, their executive in Las Vegas would benefit greatly from continued operation of that facility. Seems like a logical idea to me. So I think Senator Smith has a fair idea. Yes, it's been on other bills. But of course, so have we. We've been on a lot of other bills, and we've spent a lot more time on these two bills than any other bills this session. But I think it's at its merit today, and I think we should discuss it today. But here's what I think is really going on. Regardless of what amendment gets adopted or denied adoption to this constitutional amendment, here's what I think is happening. Members of this Legislature are getting up to create a record on why they're voting the way they are, to cover themselves, so that we can vote. And so if they're going to call the question, it eliminates opportunities for members who need that cover to explain to the world why it is that they would like this idea to be sanctioned by the state of Nebraska. Now Senator Preister mentioned that we have a lottery now. That's true. That is very true. I don't know very many people spending their entire paycheck for lottery tickets. I know people who have spent their entire paycheck at a casino. There's a huge difference. However, the state wants to sanction them both as if they're equal. And they're not. But what's really going on here--because I haven't heard compelling arguments; there are some--but what's really going on here are members of the Legislature need to make sure that the record is clear on why they're voting. That's appropriate. So if you want to call the question, you're probably going to deprive members of their opportunity to cover themselves on different issues, and this one is probably the biggest one. Do what you're going to do. I think Senator Smith offers us an idea here. Some of you are going to tell me that you're going to vote to put this on the ballot but you're going to vote against it when it gets on the ballot. Why? Because you don't necessarily believe that casinos are a good idea. You don't necessarily believe that it's in the best interest of the state. But you want to empower people--which, Senator Redfield has already pointed out, they're