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FLOOR DEBATE

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LB 332

estimated to anywhere from \$5,000 to \$13,000 per year; 77.9 percent of all vehicles in the parking lots of Iowa casinos are Nebraskans; another 240,000 family member...family members, friends, coworkers, and community members will be affected due to the gambling problems. Why should we develop and pass LB 332? Well, since 1992, casino gambling has been available to the citizens. Every state which borders ours has casino gambling, with the exception of Wyoming. Currently, 55 percent of all help line callers report casino gambling as their main problem gambling, though casinos are not legal in Nebraska. The third most reported form of gambling is sports betting; again, not legal in Nebraska. Keno, lottery are both legal; two and four respectively. In the year 2004, GAP providers served 2...excuse me, served 820 unique individuals. That is a 210 percent increase over the last two years. And may I repeat that, that providers served 820 individuals in 2004 and that's a 210 percent increase over the past two years. In the year 2004, the hours of nonreimbursed services for problem gamblers was 550 hours. This year it's anticipated to have a shortfall already of about \$156,000. The delivery service is currently overloaded, despite no awareness funds used to promote the GAP provider services. The total dollar amount spent for help line services in Nebraska, which is a 24/7 hotline, is \$50,000, compared to that of \$1.2 million for awareness for budget, 1-800-Bets-Off in Iowa. Iowa service providers will see approximately 1,000 unique individuals in 2004, compared to 800 in Nebraska. Iowa budgeted \$4.2 million; Nebraska budgeted a little over \$800,000. So why do we need General Funds? Well, last year the constitutional amendment that transferred funds to the State Fair unintentionally froze all lottery funds and prevented legislation that would seek unclaimed lottery funds to help problem gambling families. Further, it made lottery dollars virtually untouchable. Does treatment work? Research shows that where there is public health model is implemented, not only does treatment work; a reduction of overall problem gaming can be achieved. Studies in Iowa and Oregon indicated 74 percent of treatment participants were successful as a result of treatment efforts. More importantly, Nebraska citizens are being successful. A 2003-2004 Magellan study revealed/indicated 47 percent of those seeking problem gambling (sic) had utilized state mental health and substance abuse services within one year