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FLOOR DEBATE

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start legislating through the budget process. This is the proper forum to debate the bill, and that's what we're doing here today, and I believe I'm going to support it. The state of Nebraska has created a problem and I think we should clean up our messes. It would be preferable, as she has stated, if we could take lottery funds. Perhaps in the future we might want to introduce a constitutional amendment to go back and allow a provision of this kind of money for counseling for those who have become addicted to the gambling that we have authorized in this state. But at present time that is not available to us, and I believe that it is incumbent upon us to support it. I understand the budget realities, but I also believe it is important that the state of Nebraska take responsibility for the problems that it creates, and therefore I will support the bill. Thank you.

SENATOR CUDABACK: Thank you, Senator Redfield. Senator Smith.

SENATOR SMITH: Thank you, Mr. President and members. I rise in support of Senator McDonald's efforts to bring some funding to the compulsive gambling programs and prevention, treatment, and otherwise, and I do that because I believe it speaks to the larger issue. It calls attention to, I believe, what is a dilemma the state faces regarding the lottery, regarding the larger issues of gambling. And is it a spending measure? Yes. That does concern me. But when I see that some funds up-front invested in a wise manner can be used down the road to reduce ultimate costs to the state, I certainly look favorably on that. It concerns me a great deal that we have the lottery that sends mixed messages, and actually I can't think of another vice, if you will, that is actually illegal if it's practiced in a private setting but it's legal, encouraged, and heavily advertised as long as it's state-sanctioned and the state gets most, basically all, of the money, except those that go to the vendors. And now they're lobbying us heavily in certain directions regarding the lottery. It concerns me a great deal when I read that the odds on Powerball are worsened so that the jackpot can get up there higher and that more people will play when it's higher so, therefore, the more people we can get to play, for whatever reason. The state doesn't care whatever reason people play the lottery. They just want them to play. I