

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

April 3, 2006

LR 259

was told it was used for environment and educational purposes. And I don't recall one word being talked about that it was for environmental grants for innovative environmental issues. It was...the public was sold on this concept by saying the funds would be put into a dedicated source for environmental and educational issues. And Senator Preister, if he had heard earlier when I talked about the educational component, he made an analogy about how you'll let one kid come into harm's way and the other you don't care about, or you protect that one, I don't know. But there is an Excellence in Education Council that gives grants for innovative educational awards now. There is a bill pending in front of the Legislature that eliminates that. So I don't know how you protect the educational funds in the same way that we're advocating protecting the environment funds, at this late date, on this afternoon, as an amendment to this bill. I don't see how it's done, given that there's a pending measure. All I'm trying to say is, if the public was sold on the lottery concept by saying the money would go to education and environment, why are we protecting the environment and not protecting the education component? That's all that I am saying. We can't protect the education component, in my mind, unless somebody more creative than I--and there's probably 48 of you in here that are--we can't do it at this late day because we have a pending bill that eliminates the entire educational...or, excuse me, Excellence in Education Council. So how do you do this? And quite frankly, Senator Preister, how do you square this in your mind that it's okay to protect one and just toss the other to the wolves? I don't get it. The public was sold on the concept the money was going to be used for education and environment. And again, if we're going to eliminate one, we should eliminate them both; if we protect one, we should protect them both. And to Senator Erdman's point, there's other...there's the compulsive gambler, the State Fair, and the lottery. We're saying...or, excuse me, we're saying the State Fair, the gamblers assistance, and the environment are more important than the funding for our kids. And I don't know what Senator Chambers...I understand the issues that he's talking about. This was money that went to grants for innovative educational ideas. And quite frankly, I don't know what those ideas were. I don't know what the grants went to. And I don't know what the grants are going for, for the Environmental Trust.