

February 21, 1980

LB 612

that, Mr. Chairman, I would move for the adoption of LB 612.

PRESIDENT: Motion on the desk. Read the motion, Mr. Clerk.

CLERK: Mr. President, Senator Chambers moves to indefinitely postpone LB 612.

PRESIDENT: The Chair recognizes Senator Chambers.

SENATOR CHAMBERS: Mr. Chairman and members of the Legislature, I think the State of Nebraska has reached a sorry state of affairs when gambling is going to be utilized as a means to fund special education or any other kind of program but I think the way I phrased the statement is to put the cart before the horse. Special education and other worthy programs are to be used as a blind and a smoke screen to benefit people who specialize in setting up lotteries, who provide the tickets and the other paraphernalia, the consultants, and in some cases probably even the sellers of the tickets. I think this is a scheme which is not in the best interest of the state. Although the bill says that a minor, meaning one under nineteen, cannot purchase one of these tickets, a person can purchase it and give it to the minor as a gift, I guess similar to the way some people purchase alcohol and give it to minors. If the gambling is good, if it is going to be used for special education, which is designed and aimed, designed for and aimed at children, generally, why not allow the children to participate in this positive good. It is going to be impossible for the state to convert an activity which right now is very, very suspect, morally and on other grounds, try to convert it into a positive good, then say that the children cannot participate in it. I think it is beneath the dignity of this state to enter into professional gambling and that is exactly what it is. Horse racing being legalized has not done away with crap shooting, the other sheets that Senator Simon talked about that relate to betting on football games and other sporting events, parlay sheets they call them. I don't know if there are number rackets in the state, but if there are, having a lottery will not do anything to diminish that. As a matter of fact when the state endorses and approves a thing, that can tend to encourage the participation in that activity on different levels by the citizens. Just last year a bill was passed which will make a second offense gambling into a felony. Because of the enactment of that law, there have been sweeps through the City of Omaha picking up various individuals engaged in this illicit activity. One happened to be a coach at one of the junior high schools.