

SENATOR HIGGINS: Thank you, Mr. Speaker and those senators that are still here, working diligently, reading the paper or the poem I passed out. We haven't talked at all since we started this session about gambling. Nobody has talked about lotteries. Nobody has talked about Las Vegas and crap shooting, but I'm going to. Donna Karnes has sent out this letter which all of you received. It says the elimination of approximately 318,000 in personal services, et cetera, from the Department of Revenue's budget will ultimately lead to lowering the state's receipts \$3.4 million or \$3,400,000. As I see it, it comes down to this. The proponents of cutting the Revenue Department's budget 319 or \$318,000 are saying we won't lose 3.4 million or over \$3 million as the Tax Commissioner says. So when you punch the red or the green button, what you are really doing is shooting craps. You're gambling on who is right. Is Senator Haberman right or is Senator Vard Johnson right? That's a pretty big gamble. You want to lay \$318,000 on the table and gamble that you're not going to lose over 3 million. It's that simple. Keep the 318,000 in your pocket and you save that, but you're gambling. If Donna Karnes is right, that you're going to lose \$3,400,000, personally, I don't like those kind of odds. I'd rather take a chance and spend \$318,000 this year and next year, if Miss Karnes is wrong, send her to Las Vegas. But I don't want to gamble on losing over \$3 million this year when that is why we are having this special session because we need the money and it makes sense to me, and personally, I would love to see less audits on tax revenues. I mean, I've been audited several times and believe me, it's not an enjoyable thing. And I suppose a lot of us might feel that way, fewer auditors, less chance of our number coming up. But we're really gambling, aren't we? Who is right? So, put the 318,000 in your pocket and then maybe next year we will find out we have lost more than 3 million and we didn't save 318,000, we lost 3,400,000. So if you agree with the Tax Commissioner who should be in a position to know, then you will vote with Senator Vard Johnson, you vote for his amendment. But if you don't think the Tax Commissioner knows, or has all the facts straight, and you want to win 318,000 this year, then you vote against the Johnson amendment. But for my money, the biggest bet I have ever made is about \$5.00 and I don't want to gamble losing 3,400,000.

SPEAKER NICHOL: One minute.