

would like to see them made illegal. That may or may not be hypocritical. I know all of us have different standards on what we feel is appropriate and what is inappropriate. We have debated gambling too much this session. I just feel that this amendment that Senator Higgins offers is very reasonable. The people that I know of that are involved in off track betting are not gangsters. They are not criminals. They are basically people that have entered into a business that feel like it would be a way that they could make a living. We are by this bill taking that right away from them. I don't object to that. I don't want off track betting in the State of Nebraska. However, to say that your one year lease, your various other contracts you have entered into are going to be jerked out from under you as soon as this bill becomes effective I think is improper. I think it is only reasonable that we do in fact give them until the end of this year to phase out their business. It is, therefore, I urge support of the Higgins amendment and also support of the bill. Thank you.

PRESIDENT: Senator Newell. Senator Newell, your light is on. Do you wish to speak on the Higgins amendment?

SENATOR NEWELL: Well, I have to speak but very briefly. The amendment that is being offered I think is a very reasonable amendment. You have got to understand that in Omaha there are a lot of businessmen and women who in fact have gone into this business. It may not be the right business to be in. It is much like the video slots thing but I guess I would argue this and very simply this. It is not unreasonable to put the emergency clause on to allow them to operate one more season in Ak-Sar-Ben before you require that they go away and not do business any more. It is a way of offering them something and at the same time winning the basic issue that you outlaw this kind of business activity. With that in mind, I very strongly urge that you adopt the amendment. Remember, this amendment has the emergency clause on it. There will not be any new off track betting activities set up with the passage of this bill. It is very similar to the compromise we struck on video slots. I think it is reasonable here.