

this was the only way to go with this bill this year, and of course as Senator Schmit knows, we take our votes wherever we can get them and if packaging is the name of the game, we now have a horse racing industry package here before us. And I point out, I guess, that there is no hypocrisy on my part because I'm not dancing on the head of a pin. I've never had a big problem with voting on gambling bills, so my skirts are clean on that account. I want to read into the record just a couple of things and again, I only speak for the Columbus track. I only, I can speak for the Columbus track, but I want to go back and show you how we took the racing industry for granted in this state for many years. I have some figures before me. In 1980 the Columbus track kept \$112,000 profit, paid \$405,000 taxes to the state. If you think that was bad, in 1981 the Columbus track was allowed to keep \$16,000 profit and paid the state \$357,000 in taxes. Now I suggest that if we had any other industry that was taxed to that extent, probably 95 percent, they would be down here in arms. So we did take them for granted and we've gradually moved in the right direction. We've had a lot of horse racing bills. I've introduced three or four of them myself in the last three years. We're now to this position where Columbus last year made \$296,000 profit and in spite of what you might have read in the World Herald this year that said Columbus track pays no taxes, they did pay \$62,417 according to the Department of Revenue. So in spite of what our constituents think, just because you read it in the World Herald it isn't necessarily true. Columbus track does pay taxes. As I said, I've had bills before us here every year that I have been down here, one to deal with messenger services one year, one to raise the exemption to \$7 million and this year to increase the number of days that Columbus can race. We're gradually moving, gradually, toward a point where I think the track at Columbus will be able to survive, but this is the last piece in the puzzle and this is the piece that we need. We know about the added competition at Ak-Sar-Ben and I want to get this very clear across to some of the members of the body that are listening, if there are any. I think Senator Chambers is one that is listening. We talk about the added competition at Ak-Sar-Ben, there is competition to all of the tracks in the state, some of it from Ak-Sar-Ben, quite frankly. As Ak-Sar-Ben picks up more competition, they do things to become more aggressive and try to move in attracting the racing public and now of course Columbus is competing with Ak-Sar-Ben directly on weekends the first part of their