

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS PRESIDING

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: One minute.

SENATOR AVERY: ...see the individuals that we went over to the dinner and had, they say those animals are very valuable, but we also have a few individuals that are in the state that may have more money than sense and that they are just...it is a hobby. They put them out, they like to see them. It isn't a business, so, potentially, they aren't as concerned when those animals get loose and I just want to bring that to the point and for the record, that there is all sorts out there. And we open this door allowing that to come in, they will use the same door and, potentially, any time that you have an animal escape from some type of a area, you have a potential for damage. Thank you.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Thank you, Senator Avery. Senator Wickersham, followed by Senator Beutler and Dierks.

SENATOR WICKERSHAM: Thank you, Mr. President. I will try to be brief because I think the answers to my questions have been raised. But, Senator Dierks, as I read the amendment and the ability of the commission to promulgate rules and regulations, when conditions that constitute a serious threat to economic or ecologic conditions exist, I am reading the words "economic or ecologic conditions" to mean either health problems or cross-breeding. Is that, essentially, what those are code words for?

SENATOR DIERKS: Yeah, that is essentially what it means.

SENATOR WICKERSHAM: Okay, thank you. I do appreciate the work that the committee and Senator Dierks have done to resolve differences that may have been revolving around this issue. It is becoming a more important industry, a more important part, I should say, of the agricultural community to produce these kinds of animals. And, certainly, diversification within the agricultural community is desirable. We've all experienced the wide fluctuations in the past. If this will help to even that out, certainly to be commended and to be promoted, if that is possible. I was initially concerned, however, as I think many people were, about the health issues in particular because of the very strong livestock industry we have in this state. If those are addressed, and I take it from Senator Dierks' words, those are addressed, and, as well, I think we need to have some