

April 2, 1980

LB 939

SPEAKER MARVEL: Okay, Senator Sieck, do you have amendments to the Warner amendments?

SENATOR SIECK: Yes, I do have an amendment.

CLERK: Mr. President, Senator Sieck moves to amend the Warner amendment by striking 1, 2, 5, and 6. Is that right?

SENATOR SIECK: That speaks of the stewards and the members of the racing track, commission. Mr. President, members of the body, there actually are really two amendments but I put them all in one. First I will talk about the Racing Commission members since Senator Kelly did speak about them. I can't agree with Senator Kelly because I feel that it wouldn't make any difference whether it would be five or three, he would still have that problem. The majority always rules you know. I feel that the matter of increasing the Racing Commission from three to five members was a tremendous subject at the public hearings and was strongly opposed by the racing industry and that was including both thoroughbred and the quarter horse segments of the industry. The Horsemen Association and Association of County Fair Managers also opposed it. Now our present Racing Commission has functioned well over the years and no reason has been given why five commissioners are needed other than what we heard this evening. Our present commission form has been recognized nationally as one of the better commissions set up and to increase its membership from three to five would serve no purpose except to add to the expense of the commission and to make it more cumbersome to function. It is felt that one of the reasons for the proposed increase from three to five is because of disagreements about racing date assignments other than the Sunday thing that Senator Kelly talked about. This is a matter within the commission jurisdiction discretion and should be handled in the hearing before the commission rather than an attempt to change the commission itself. I also have a member, one of my constituents, would like to be on that Racing Commission and he asked me to increase it to five and here I stand here and say that I feel it should be only three. I feel it is kind of a political gimmick. At the present time they are appointed by the congressional districts. I think that is fine. If we get into five members where are they going to come from? The other portion of the amendment that I disagree with is the stewards. Now I feel that all stewards should be employees of the commission and the commission may levy a fee against all corporation associations. Okay, in the past the stewards have been hired and paid by the respective tracks at which the race track meets and are run.