

SENATOR CONWAY: Mr. Speaker, members of the body, I rise in support of the committee amendments as they now pertain to LB 1041, the bill that I originally introduced and was presented to the Revenue Committee. At that time there was two other maiden line bills being offered in the area of parimutuel racing, LB 798 which was introduced by Senator DeCamp relative to a changing in the parimutuel tax, LB 803 which Senator Rupp offered in behalf of the Columbus race track with respect to moving from three to four race days and 1041. LB 1041 in its original structure was designed for to be nothing more than a trust type fund to be developed to support the smaller tracks within the industry. As most people in the body are well aware, in the State of Nebraska we have what you might view as three major tracks with Ak-Sar-Ben, Fonner and Lincoln and the two smaller tracks being Columbus and Atokad. With this fund and the intent of that fund was back in about 1981 the Racing Commission started moving some dates and made some drastic alterations in the dates, where we had a situation that some of the smaller tracks found their racing meets later in the year. Since that time we've since allowed Ak-Sar-Ben to run on Sundays which put them in direct competition to Atokad which had been running on Sundays during the summer months and so we're really looking at it in terms of the overall industry, the horse racing industry within the state. We're looking at it with the extent to which we've got a \$350 million industry and if we move it away from the gambling, we move it away from the race track per se and we look at that industry and we become aware of the agricultural impact that racing has on the state. Some of the statistics have shown that something like 650 quarter section farms total productivity goes into the racing industry with respect to the breeding and the training and the development of the horses in preparation for ultimately being involved in racing whether directly involved or whether we're talking about the raising of future runners and then to be sold out of the state or to be trained and to be run on the tracks in the state. So we look at the racing industry in the state and one of our real strengths is the fact that we have these smaller tracks that are training grounds that are made available for people for Nebraska-bred horses to have a place to start off their careers and then establish themselves before they move up to the larger tracks and so we do look at it as an industry and we see the value of those smaller tracks with respect to that particular phase of the industry. I think anyone who is