

around Columbus or Atokad or some of the other smaller areas and including the quarter-horse tracks which are also being represented and will benefit from this fund, that those physical plants are extremely valuable to those communities, providing a physical plant and location for everything from county fairs to ultimately the economic impact that comes from the tourism and other cultural events are held on those facilities and we look at those as really being mainstay center attractions in those communities that are extremely valuable to the overall scheme of the economic development and the economic activity that goes on in those communities. So without question, you know, there is a great deal of value and there is a great deal of value in holding the industry together with the small tracks being a major part. And Senator Vard Johnson described the fund to you. It's not out of tax dollars. It's a matter of taking one more percent from the exotic portion or the exotic type bets that are being wagered and rather than paying them out to the winners, that 1 percent is put into a fund and then there is a distribution technique from that fund that would ultimately go out to Columbus and Atokad as the smaller tracks and also a portion then would also go to the three quarter-horse tracks in the state. And it's one of these opportunities that we have to provide a scheme and a system that we can provide support rather than the subsidies which we've experienced in the past that have come directly from Ak-Sar-Ben successes.

SENATOR HANNIBAL: One minute.

SENATOR CONWAY: Ak-Sar-Ben has been quite philanthropic in their helping out the smaller tracks and in recognizing the value of the industry and has been offering subsidies to these smaller tracks because of the known value that they provide to the entire industry. As Ak-Sar-Ben has expressed some concerns in competition, we're well aware that those subsidies may not even be possible in the future. So this was an idea that was brought to me and I've carried it through on 1041. Since that time the committee amendments that I also support are all to try to strengthen and to develop and help the industry as a whole. So, with that I strongly endorse the committee amendments attached to LB 1041 and urge your support.

SENATOR HANNIBAL: Thank you, Senator Conway. Next, Senator Nelson.