

CLERK: Mr. President, Senator Rod Johnson would move to amend. Senator, I have AM1707 in front of me. (R. Johnson amendment appears on pages 2210-11 of the Legislative Journal.)

SENATOR WARNER: Senator Johnson.

SENATOR R. JOHNSON: Thank you Mr. President, members, this amendment is known as the 2 percent amendment. It would authorize a 2 percent of the gross proceeds from keno operated in a particular county in which a racetrack was licensed. The money would go toward supplementing the thoroughbred racing handle, or I should say the money would be going toward purses. We have seen a tremendous decline in the last few years in the handle. In fact, I've got a handout that I will be passing around to show you the decline from, and this is just using the example from Ak-Sar-Ben, going from in 1985 a handle of \$154 million to last year's handle of 69 million, a rapid decrease as you can see. Meanwhile, in the keno Omaha area of gambling we've seen an increase from zero which was in 1987 to 1990 last year where we saw \$43.5 million spent in the keno area, so this money would be put into purses based on a pro rata basis back to each of the tracks, based on their gross handle per racing session at their particular track. It would be administered by the State Racing Commission. It would go into a Thoroughbred Racing Assistance Fund and the 2 percent, I don't know quite frankly what that would raise at this particular point for money, but it is, the purpose behind it is to supplement the purses so that we can hopefully get the purses up to where we're going to draw more and better horses to our tracks in Nebraska and hopefully increase the interest by the public in the horse racing industry here in Nebraska. It is estimated that horse racing in Nebraska is worth to our economy between 300 and \$400 million a year. It's a fairly significant industry to our state and obviously we'd like to keep our handle and keep the racing industry going in this country or in this state. This is one way we can help supplement those purses to continue the interest level of the public which goes to the track and hopefully draw better and better horses to Nebraska and also in the same turn help those Nebraska breeders in Nebraska who are impacted by the size of the purses that are paid out in each racing day. So that is the amendment, Mr. President.

SENATOR WARNER: Okay, Senator Nelson.