

is obviously not quite as well known as thoroughbred racing, but that's what the amendment did. I just wanted to stand up and clarify so that people realize we're not talking about doing the same thing over again. We're actually talking about doing something similar to what we did to LB 795 but only injecting it now into LB 849 to help an industry that has had some rough times and, as I said, as we proliferate gambling, whether it's keno, pickles, bingo, videos, ticket lottery, whatever it might be, they all feed upon the thoroughbred horse racing system which has had a tough time in recent years. It is a major, probably somewhere between 300 and 400 million dollar industry to Nebraska. If you have the feeling, as Senator Wesely does, that this is no longer a necessary industry in the state then I suggest that you vote against the amendment, but I think based upon the breeders, the growers, the people who make a livelihood off of the horse racing industry, they would, I guess, claim that this is a very viable and very important industry to the State of Nebraska and is one that, through these additional gambling dollars, we can supplement the purses to help attract not only better horses to Nebraska but also to attract or keep Nebraska-bred horse systems alive here in Nebraska. So I would appreciate the support for the amendment.

SENATOR CONWAY: Thank you, Senator Johnson. Senator Hall, you're next.

SENATOR HALL: Thank you, Mr. President and members. I rise to support the amendment, but I need to draw a distinction between the, I guess, the state issue, because it's clearly one of do we keep the revenue or do we let...send it to the industry, and that's clearly a policy question. The issue of the local option lottery, and the reason I believe that that provision that we put on 795 is very appropriate is because, frankly, for the same reason as Senator Wesely pointed out to oppose this provision, we're not raising any of that revenue on that local option lottery and we're not benefitting from horse racing, per se, as a whole, at least the state isn't. It has been an industry that we've had to, in essence, cut back and for three years tax exempt the entire industry. They currently now are bringing in about a million dollars a year, I think is what they're paying. On the 795 provision, it was specific to a county where a track happens to operating where they also happen to have a keno operation. That makes sense because that local community is going to benefit from the track. They're going to benefit from the keno as well. It makes sense to keep both of