

funds are now less than what it takes to support the agency, and now we're in somewhat of a dilemma, is it a proper public purpose to provide General Funds to support this agency? If you would have attended the hearing, and it was an excellent, lively hearing, as it always is when the Athletic Commission people are around, you would hear a lot of interesting information that probably most of you would...would have, I think, supported the decision that the Government Committee made in killing the bill and eliminating the commission. What we have in Nebraska is a very efficient, very well run Athletic Commission that deals with the health and safety of people in the combative sports, that are not gone. We still...we have less events, we have less participation than we had in the past, but we still have these events. And one of the things that they were able to point out is that through our rules and regulations they wouldn't mean very much in these types of events, unless there was some kind of enforcement powers included into those. Senator Moore alluded to the State of South Dakota, and it was brought to our attention that many of the licensed professionals, in terms of the timekeepers, referees, and even some of the physicians do not attend those events because of liability, because without oversight and the concern of what may happen. We have a very strong tradition of having, like I say, an excellent set of rules that are very strictly enforced, via the Athletic Commission, with the part-time commissioner himself, as well as, I believe, ten people who are paid periodically to go out and do some of the enforcement activities. We do not have a history of anyone ever being...being hurt in the ring, and we are talking, to a great extent, amateur boxing as well, which is a sport that has been around, the Golden Gloves, for a long time. I think we can certainly go back to members in this body who have participated in that particular event, including Senator Hartnett himself, and knows that they have to be, if we're going to have such an event in the state, they must be properly run and the oversight provided for it. What the committee basically looked at, I think in the long haul, was yes, we want the rules and regulations we have. Yes, we want a reputation where these events are held, where they are safe, and probably the most efficient means to do that is this central entity, this State Athletic Commissioner, who has the rules, regulations, has the people on board and can provide that oversight. If we have the same rules and regulations and then farm out the actual costs of that to the City of Lincoln, or the City of Omaha, or the City of South Sioux City, or the various counties there about, we ultimately, to...end up probably having a much higher cost