

March 21, 1979

LB 164

By limiting the prize money, that really should severely put a crimp in that and the two, rather than three, having it three times really isn't going to hurt that. I don't think it is going to cause anybody to not go to the local area and play bingo and we felt that three was a reasonable compromise and I move for the adoption of the committee amendments.

SPEAKER MARVEL: The Chair will recognize Senator Johnson who has an amendment to the committee amendments.

SENATOR JOHNSON: Mr. Speaker, members of the body, I am on the committee amendments which are in the bill book and my amendment, if the Clerk would read it, does the following.

CLERK: Mr. President, Senator Johnson moves to amend the committee amendment: Read. (See page 1030, Legislative Journal.)

SENATOR JOHNSON: Mr. President, members of the body, what my amendment does, very simply, is it would eliminate the committee's amendment to this bill to allow bingo to be conducted three times per week in any building or structure and take the bill back to its original drafting of allowing bingo to be conducted twice a week in any building or structure. In addition, my amendment would not allow custodial services to be compensated. Now let me explain the rationale behind my amendment. The reason we have LB 164 before you today is because professional bingo operators are moving into the major urban areas, Omaha and Lincoln at this juncture, and who knows where next and the way the professional operator works simply is the operator engages in what I call licensed farming. The operator goes out to the charities that exist in that community and says, simply, if you will get a bingo license, we will conduct for you bingo games in our own facility. You pay us a rent. You don't have to supply any volunteer workers because we hire custodians. We hire custodians who clean the facilities and they in turn are required to volunteer their time for the conduct of bingo. So, in fact, persons are being compensated for the conduct of bingo by the professional operator who in turn is operating the game for the licensee. Very little money is returned to the licensees. Some money is but, by and large, the big money goes into the pockets of the professional. It is my belief that limiting the number of games to twice a week in any given facility sufficiently removes from the professional operation the economics in a professional operation as to cause that operation to dwindle and maybe eventually dry up. On the other hand, a careful analysis of the economics of bingo indicate that if we allow three bingo occasions to be