

onerous. This represents somewhat of a change of view on my part in that in the past I have voted for the highest possible levels of taxation of these forms of gaming. My change of heart comes about, however, because we have sufficiently given resources to our Revenue Department, it seems to me, to attack criminal behavior. Our laws are pretty tough, and at the same time as these amendments are going forward, representations were made to me by Senator Hall that he was no less vigilant and concerned about the fair operation of these games, that he would join in an attempt to make sure that our state laws were tight so that control for inappropriate behavior could be had. With that kind of an assurance, it seems reasonable to go forward then and to match that with bringing down these tax rates and allowing private schools and other charitable operations to receive the benefit of the labor. It is entirely possible for some of the smaller bingo operations to go through a great deal of effort, a great deal of work, and get very little return on their effort, given the economics of the business, and this is a way to put money into the hands of people who are doing good things, probably saving us money that would otherwise be spent in the form of public expenditures, and for that reason, I have no difficulty in attaching this amendment to the bill and to support the reduction of the bingo tax and the pickle tax.

PRESIDENT: Thank you. Senator Smith, please, followed by Senator Lynch and Senator Warner.

SENATOR SMITH: Thank you, Mr. President. I also stand to support the Section B, and I guess I would say that I will support probably the entire amendment, and if the amendment is adopted, the bill, itself. Senator Hall has already summarized very much in detail the history of bingo taxation and its current status resulting from the actions that we have taken on the floor in the past and the fact that it is now being regulated by the Charitable Gaming Division. There will be a reduction in the local tax from 4 to 2 percent. This will result in about \$440,000 annually lost to the subdivisions, the communities, themselves, but allowing that bingo activity is conducted for purposes of charity which actually benefits then the communities, themselves, and the organizations within the community, I think that this seems fair. The General Affairs Committee has heard a number of bills dealing with bingo, pickle, and that sort of thing, operations and the concerns that have resulted from the past action that we took on this floor when we tightened up on the bingo, for instance, the bingo law.