

statute, was placed in by the city in another bill. It goes back beyond that to when the county had the ability to run their own operation. And then it goes back one more time where the city was in control. So this has been an ongoing battle, if you will, where bills have been amended to give one entity the upper hand over the other with regard to whose going to control the gaming in that area, and, specifically, it relates to the City of Omaha-Douglas County relationship. What we do with LB 795 is allow those entities to proceed on an even basis, on an even footing, if you will, with regard to the issue of who is going to have the ability to operate a lottery within their own jurisdiction. With 795, as it's been amended by both Senator Withem and now, hopefully, by Senator Ashford, the bill, I think, is a well-crafted piece of legislation that puts both entities on even footing, and allows that, hopefully, a joint venture will go forth from here. With that, Mr. Speaker, I support Senator Ashford's amendment and would urge others to do as well.

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Hall. Senator Will, on the Ashford amendment.

SENATOR WILL: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, members of the body. I rise to support the Ashford amendment to the committee amendments on LB 795. I, in fact, am a co-sponsor of that amendment. I think that while 795 on its face, and certainly with the committee amendments, deals only with the keno issue and only with the keno issue, specifically, in Douglas County, there's no question in my mind that this has all been tied in with the Ak-Sar-Ben project from the beginning. In fact, when Douglas County testified in front of the General Affairs Committee on this bill, the committee of which I am a member, their entire presentation consisted of a very detailed explanation of their intentions to use keno money to purchase Ak-Sar-Ben. I think that that's been an issue that's been so controversial in Omaha, and in Douglas County, that it certainly is a prudent thing for the Legislature to do, to put a provision in the bill that would only allow funds to be expended for a project of that size with voter approval. I think that would allow the county to make their case, perhaps now in concert with the city, as we understand they are reaching an agreement. I think it's only wise that we adopt the Ashford amendment. Thank you.

SPEAKER BAACK: Thank you, Senator Will. Senator Abboud, on the