

February 18, 1992 LB 1061

the position that the Hastings track and the community are finding themselves but, again, I see this as...maybe I will use this same example, as we did on maybe LB 775, granting more and more benefits. Pretty soon we pluck so many feathers out of that duck that that duck can no longer swim, and I see this...I appreciate the fact that the quarter horse tracks are trying to exist, trying to hang on, and that same survival that we have out in many of the rural communities now, but I do have to oppose this amendment. Actually, maybe we do have too many tracks in the state and it is an industry that is facing some real problems, and I think that we need to work to support a few of the better tracks and the bigger tracks or actually we will end up with probably nothing. And I don't think any of us want to do that. I, in all fairness to the Hastings community, I hate to stand up here and do this, but I do have to object to this amendment. Thank you.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Nelson. Does anyone else wish to speak to this amendment? Seeing none, do you have closing, Senator Johnson?

SENATOR R. JOHNSON: Thank you, Madam President and members. I realize that when you fight the larger tracks, it is sometimes futile but it is my opinion that we should at least allow the quarter horse industry one more opportunity this year, since they have been given dates, to operate. Under my amendment, the larger tracks don't suffer. In fact, they make out just as good as they do now, and we provide the necessary revenues for the Department or the Racing Commission to get the necessary funds they need to operate, so the amendment is relatively simple. If you look on your committee amendment sheet, it says, on page 10, it says, "Commission the sum of 30 cents for each person entering the grounds or enclosure of the licensee upon the ticket of admission." This basically raises that fee from 30 to 40 cents. That will generate approximately over \$100,000 for the Racing Commission's use and, obviously, they came in and testified that they need the money to continue to do the job that they are, basically, required to do. So I am asking on behalf of the quarter horse association and those folks interested in racing in Nebraska to have an opportunity to at least operate for one more year under the small track fund. We and I believe Arkansas are the only two states west of the Mississippi River in states that operate racing that do not offer both quarter horse and thoroughbred racing on the same track. That is a foreign thought to probably most of us here in