

February 18, 1992 LB 929, 1061

same political party. And we would retain the provision that members cannot come from the same county. So the effect of this amendment on the commission would be that the commission would have five members, with two of the Congressional Districts having two representatives, one Congressional District having one representative, and all the members coming from different counties. The intent of this amendment, which was the intent of LB 929, was to broaden the membership of the commission and to give areas currently underrepresented the opportunity for representation. I believe the work of the Racing Commission is important to the entire racing industry in Nebraska and, currently, the Racing Commission's decisions are made only by three individuals, and in this day and age, the issues facing our racing industry are complex enough that additional input would greatly benefit the process. Our state racing industry is facing tough times, and yet the commission consists of representation from only three areas of the state. To me, it would seem logical that additional input to the commission would be helpful in these tough times of the industry. Currently, the same three areas receive representation on the commission year in and year out. This would just simply give other areas of the state that are impacted by the racing industry an opportunity for representation. It is important to note that neither this amendment nor LB 929 is intended to be a reflection on the performance of the commission members. Rather, it is meant to point out an improvement we can make in the process. Overall, this amendment gives the Racing Commission an opportunity to make itself more diverse and more responsive to the needs of the entire racing industry. With that, I would be happy to answer any questions the body may have. Thank you.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Robak. I will now recognize Senator Schellpeper, followed by Senators Will, Schimek, and Schmit. Senator Schellpeper.

SENATOR SCHELLPEPER: Thank you, Madam Chairman. I rise to oppose this amendment. We have this bill, 926 (sic), in the General Affairs Committee. What Senator Robak is really attempting to do here is to try to get a commissioner for the Columbus racetrack, and this amendment will not do that because you could still have two from Grand Island and two from Omaha and one from Lincoln, so it does not put a commissioner at all five racetracks. We, in the committee there was no one that appeared in support of it, and everyone that appeared opposed the bill because it is just going to be additional expense. I