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certainly, to give Douglas County a degree of certainty, the best thing we can do right now is to freeze the tax structure at its current levels, to try and give the industry a chance, this one last chance to recuperate. This would not be a granting of any further exemptions to the industry. They'd be paying the exact amount that they are paying right now, that they have been paying since January 1, 1991. And I think that this is an entirely appropriate amendment to address the...what is an admittedly serious situation in horse racing in Nebraska today. I would urge your support for this amendment.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Will. I'll now recognize senators wishing to speak to the Hall amendment. Senator Schmit. Excuse me, Senator Schmit. We do have an announcement.

CLERK: Senator, forgive me for just a moment. Transportation Committee will be in Exec Session now, Room 2022. Transportation Committee right now in Room 2022.

PRESIDENT MOUL: Thank you, Senator Schmit.

SENATOR SCHMIT: Thank you, Madam Chairman. Members of the body, I support the Hall amendment as introduced and explained by Senator Will. It is unfortunate, Senator Will, that your amendment cannot apply to all of the taxes being levied by the State of Nebraska, and that they could not also be frozen in place for a period of time. Would be beneficial, I think, to the state, just as this would be beneficial to racing. I do also support the original intent of the bill to allow the County of Douglas to contract with a private operator to conduct the operation at Ak-Sar-Ben. I think it is a step in the right direction, and I know there are some individuals and some institutions that have concern about that. But, I guess, I think it is a recognition of the changes in the industry, and we must accept that. And I think it can be for the better. I have a question to ask of Senator Will, and if he does not know the answer, perhaps someone else does. As we know, whenever any piece of property today changes hands, and particularly a large piece of property such as Ak-Sar-Ben field, and a type of property which has been engaged in a multitude of different activities for the past many years, 50 or 70 years, there needs to be an environmental impact statement drawn, and environmental analysis made of the property. We know what occurred when we developed the river front development park where the ConAgra campus is now located. There was substantial cleanup costs