

fund the Small Track Fund so that quarter horse racing could run this year. They have been granted dates by the Racing Commission. They have horses and trainers that are interested in coming to Nebraska. Obviously, part of the problem that has afflicted the industry has been the fact that the purses have been low and attendance has been low, but we've narrowed that or the industry now has narrowed it down to running only one site this year, and that would be in Hastings at Queen City Downs, to try and get the quarter horse racing business back on track in Nebraska. I would say this, that if this bill passes and the Small Track Fund is eventually cut out by the passage of this bill, you will basically have killed quarter horse track racing in Nebraska. There is no doubt in my mind that that is what will happen. Many of the owners and trainers of quarter horses in Nebraska will simply be forced to go to other states to run their horses, to train their horses, and we will have pushed out an industry that may or may not be able to survive, but I know in talking with the individuals involved with the Quarter Horse Association, they are interested in giving it one more chance, one more try to see if it will work in Nebraska and get this initial foot in the door for one more year. Senator Schellpeper was correct when he indicated that the track or the quarter horse racing did not run last year for a variety of reasons, but that is not to say that the interest is not there. I have met with several individuals who are interested in trying to get quarter horse racing restarted in Nebraska. The real issue I guess is, in some people's minds, can we afford to have two separate kinds of horse racing in Nebraska--thoroughbred racing and quarter horse racing? I think we can if we schedule them correctly. If you're going to compete or force quarter horse racing to compete with thoroughbred racing in Nebraska it's going to be very difficult, obviously, for quarter horse track or tracks to survive. But if we can work with the Racing Commission and set up some dates to fill gaps, basically, in the thoroughbred season I think there's fairly good chance that those folks that are interested in quarter horse racing can make a go of it. They need a window of opportunity. This window is being shut on them if this bill passes. They need one more year to prove whether or not they can make a go of it at Hastings. I think they can. There is local interest in trying to get it off the ground, but the funds in the track are necessary, the Small Track Fund are necessary, to make it a success or even to break even. So, at this particular point, I guess I'm following Senator Lamb's lead in trying to help the Small Tracks Fund stay viable for at least a year to give the that window of