

playing field and the revenues would be coming into the state to a greater degree than they do now. I think...I think there's too much of the middle man that's making the money. I agree that the idea that the charities involved should be able to make some money off of these. They're good organizations, many are churches, so obviously for them to have additional revenues is something that no one would rise in opposition to. But I think in the end I would prefer trying to get that money from those in the middle that make their money in running and operating the games versus the state and the revenues that are gained from it. I do not think that the consequences of gambling adequately are covered by the revenues raised. I think that the consequences on the social service system that we have and the different impacts that we've seen, some of those that are addicted. I think of our county commissioner up in Douglas County who had his problems, and there are others who have lost their life savings and had their lives destroyed. I don't think that occurred in bingo, but I do think that gambling has had that impact on individuals. And my point isn't that you should single out bingo and make them pay a higher rate. I'm suggesting that what we've done is have too low a tax on the other types of gambling, and we ought to have that raised and, thus, the revenue associated with it. So I take a different approach to the question of equalization, and I rise in opposition to the Hilgert amendment.

SENATOR BERNARD-STEVENS: Thank you, Senator Wesely. Senator Fisher.

SENATOR FISHER: Mr. President and members, I think of this bill as my church ladies' bill. We have bingo in the Catholic ladies in Grand Island, and I think it's a question of fairness, and I don't think the revenue should be raised up. I think this should be brought down to their level. You know, this is on gross receipts, and it really does cripple them. It's been a...and it just doesn't seem quite right. I know...and these folks that do it, they conduct it for a good purpose. It's always a donation. It goes right back into the community if they do make some money. I can see no reason there should be this much of a disparity. In fact, I'm curious and I kept asking. I guess there was a time there was a bit higher. The counties perhaps took a 2 percent. I know we'll get some local money. They'll lose some, but it's not that. I think it's a...it's a question of equality between the different