

# **One Hundred Seventh Legislature - First Session - 2021**

## **Introducer's Statement of Intent**

### **LB371**

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**Chairperson: Senator Tom Briese**

**Committee: General Affairs**

**Date of Hearing: February 01, 2021**

The following constitutes the reasons for this bill and the purposes which are sought to be accomplished thereby:

Historically, the Legislature has amended section 2-219, which restricts activities at fairs, to permit forms of gaming as they have been authorized, including bingo, lotteries, raffles, pari-mutuel betting, and pickle cards. As of today, it does not permit games of chance to be conducted at, or within “40 rods” (roughly 660 feet), of an enclosure where a fair is occurring. With the passage of the Nebraska Racetrack Gaming Act of 2020, this presents a conflict for licensed racetracks which host a fair and are seeking to construct a casino.

As of 2021, three fairs are held at licensed racetracks. If these racetracks choose to construct a casino, current statute would dictate that they must stop their gaming operations for the duration of the fair OR the fair must identify a new venue. Given the financial, and tax revenue, implications of a casino stopping their operation and the logistical implications of relocating an established fair, neither option is ideal.

LB371 would authorize games of chance to be conducted pursuant to the Nebraska Racetrack Gaming Act of 2020 at, or near, locations where a fair is being held. LB371 would not authorize any party besides the licensed gaming operator, pursuant to the NE Racetrack Gaming Act, to conduct games of chance and gaming operators would still be subject to statute governing games of chance and regulations promulgated by the State Gaming Commission. LB371 would not intertwine a fair and a casino but would allow both the fair and casino to operate parallel to each other.

**Principal Introducer:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Senator Raymond Aguilar**