

I am writing today to thank you for your introduction and hearing of HB-128 / SB-77: USE OF INTERNET FOR CHARITABLE GAMING, and to offer support and amendments.

The long overdue allowance of the use of the internet for the conduct of charitable gaming in Alaska benefits every recipient of non-profit services across our state. From youth hockey, to veterans, and the alleviation of suffering, from education and health resources to every gap in our lives that Alaska's non-profits provide. The State has long recognized the work our charities do to provide services the state budget cannot afford. It was with this in mind that the Charitable Gaming Act was designed, and it is time for this act to catch up with the times.

A special allowance was added this year for the conduct of gaming online. This was brought due to the pandemic response circumstances, which prohibited the usual distribution of raffle and lottery tickets. Put simply, we just couldn't meet people in person to make the sales, and the State knew that they relied on the services we provide, so they made an exception.

It is vital to make this change permanent. The Permittees & Operators have demonstrated that this program works, and that there is no need to further constrain our efforts. We have proven that we can be accountable through this system, and we would argue now, that it may be the only way some of us will survive to continue to do our good work.

Alaska's conservation and sportsmen's groups led the charge on this initiation and ensured its continuance in the emergency declarations through direct communications with the Governor's Office, but the change benefitted all recipients of gaming funds, and the people receiving their services. We are grateful for your recognition of the importance to Alaska's communities this legislation brings.

We would like to see the language removed from pages 2 & 3, which states:

- (11) establishment of standards for online ticket sales under AS 05.15.640(d) to ensure compliance with charitable gaming laws, including*
 - (A) age and location verification requirements reasonably designed to block Internet sales to persons who are located outside the state or who are not of legal purchasing age; and*
 - (B) appropriate data security standards to prevent unauthorized Internet sales to a person whose age and current location has not been verified;*

This language is wholly unnecessary, as age restrictions are not applied to raffles but to methods which will not be conducted online, such as pull-tabs, calcuttas, and bingo. Location verification software places an undue burden on most small operators and permittees; and, as our outdoor groups have demonstrated, in many instances the bulk of our proceeds may be obtained from other locations outside Alaska when our prizes are related to the Alaska dream. The point of sale will be in Alaska, by Alaska charitable gaming permittees and operators, and we should have the ability to obtain the greatest benefit for Alaskans. This section constrains those efforts to a point where many will not be able to utilize this tool and will not be able to recover the funds they need to stay afloat. Although the suggestion may have come from legislative drafting, or department staff, this body decides what to include, and we urge you to remove it.

We would like to see additional language necessary for clarification added to page 3.

Page 3, line 8 following permittee
in insert" an operator or holder of multi-beneficiary permit"

page 3, line 9 following online
insert" or by other electronic or digital means"

The revenue brought in by making this opportunity permanent will support the state budget directly through fees and the relief to the budget brought by Alaska's charities who provide direct services to communities.

Above all, we are grateful for the work you do on our behalf, and for your recognition of the good works of our Alaska non-profits.

Regards,

4/18/21

Rob Proffitt

GM Fairbanks Ice Dogs Hockey Team