



**Northern Lights Bingo**  
**Jerry Lewis Owner Operator**

Senator Olson,

You may be aware of the recent claims regarding SB170 and how well Minnesota is doing with e-tabs, along with assertions that our bill mirrors the Minnesota model. It is important to clarify that this is not accurate.

The bill as it is written heavily favors locations selling alcohol. In 2024 these locations only generated 10% of net proceeds to charities in Alaska. Minnesota's charitable gaming market is fundamentally different from Alaska's. Minnesota does not have operators. In Alaska, Operators generate over 50% of net proceeds paid to charities.

If we are going to reference the Minnesota model, then let's be clear about what that actually entails:

- Minnesota limits the number of tablets allowed in establishments serving alcohol to 6. SB170, on the other hand, allows ten tablets, or one tablet for every six persons permitted to occupy the premises. Given that all bars exceed 600 square feet, this effectively means ten tablets in every location. We should stay with Minnesota's limit.
- Minnesota also limits the amount a location serving alcohol can retain to no more than 15%. SB170 proposes a 25% retention rate. This is a significant difference. We must be very careful here, especially in situations where operators and permittees rent space within a bar to conduct pull-tab gaming. Any restriction should clearly apply to the establishment itself. Also, we should stay with the Minnesota limit of 15%.
- Additionally, Minnesota limits what a manufacturer can charge for a game to 25%, including any tax. SB170 sets that limit at 35% and does not include the tax. Again, this is not a minor distinction. If 25% works in Minnesota it should work in Alaska.

There are several factors affecting gaming in Alaska. Alaska has an illegal casino operating in Eklutna with no benefit to any charity. Also, the casino is advertising heavily while bingo halls and pull-tab stores are not allowed to advertise. We need to remove the archaic prohibition on advertising.

The way the bill is currently written it would likely lead to the end of pull-tab stores and many bingo halls, thereby reducing the funds provided to Charitable Gaming.

The bill would be easier to support if it actually did mimic the Minnesota model.

Our greatest concern is protecting the Alaskan gold standard for Charitable Gaming. Once we open the door to e-tabs there is no going back.

Sincerely,

Jerry Lewis

