

## Konrad Jackson

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**From:** Jack Heesch <akjack1944@gmail.com>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 22, 2024 11:25 AM  
**To:** Senate Labor and Commerce  
**Subject:** SB146

**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

My name is Jack Heesch. I am the President and Primary Member in Charge of a small non-profit, Anchorage Youth and Recreation. (AY&R)

Our main focus is fastpitch softball. We, together with a number of like-minded groups in a loose coalition in Anchorage provide organized play for girls as young as 10 and Under to 18 and Under. In total some 200 to 250 young women play this team sport under our auspices.

This includes managing, on behalf of the Anchorage School District, both the Middle School and High School programs. We receive no financial support from the School District and each school has to raise its own funds to participate. AY&R provides financial support to each of the schools.

Our coalition also provides a robust summer program. That includes an introductory program for young women unfamiliar with softball, to a calendar of tournaments at all age levels.

Each summer a three day training camp is offered for all levels of play, run by 20-25 College Coaches brought to Anchorage. Finally, a number of our competitive teams travel outside to compete in regional and national tournaments, many attended by College Coaches. All this is accomplished with volunteers and paid for from fundraising activities year round.

I won't go into extolling the great lessons learned playing a team sport, but I will leave you with two tangible outcomes of our efforts.

Every high school coach has stories of young high school women who have stayed in school so they could play softball for their school. These are students who might otherwise have dropped out of school, but instead graduate.

Also, each year we can point to anywhere from a handful to a dozen of the young women in these programs being awarded softball scholarships to play at colleges and universities all over the country.

The funding AY&R receives through charitable gaming finds ways to support all of these aspects of a program that receives little recognition or acknowledgement.

Our small organization is like many other charitable gaming non-profits. They go about doing their good work in ways many of us don't even know about. We are out there quietly doing what we can to make life better for Alaskans.

In considering this bill, please be aware of the potential unintended consequences of this action. Please take care to protect a system that is working and benefitting Alaskans throughout the state.