

SB 2309
Senate Finance & Taxation Committee
Submitted by Janelle Mitzel, CGAND
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The Charitable Gaming Association of ND urges a **Do Not Pass** recommendation on SB 2309. The intent of SB 2309 is to drive business away from charitable gaming across North Dakota, and to drive business to tribal operations. This is a re-distribution of dollars from local cities and counties, to tribal reservations.

Why is charitable gaming important?

Here are just a few examples of how charitable gaming revenues have helped improve our communities in recent years:

- At **Development Homes**, these dollars have helped provide security, equipment, and specialized training to place vulnerable adolescents into community-based homes from the Life Skills and Transition Center in Grafton. We are continuing to de-institutionalize ND citizens.
- The **Lamoure Baseball Booster Club** rebuilt and maintain the local baseball fields while covering costs for the Legion Baseball program, including paying coaches and travel costs for kids play baseball. They were also able to donate additional dollars to support the local volunteer ambulance service and fire department, helping to improve public safety.
- Charitable gaming helps fund **many** volunteer fire departments across the state, including in **Verona**, where gaming helped provide grants for new fire equipment and fire vehicles, and in **Leonard**, where gaming revenue grants helped purchase life-saving equipment and maintain their fire trucks. These are clear public safety benefits that otherwise would need to be funded using state or local tax dollars.
- The Fargo **Metro Baseball Association** was able to convert a local baseball field into a state-of-the-art artificial turf field, build concession and locker room facilities, and cover all expenses, including travel, for fielding three legion baseball teams.
- The **Bowman Economic Development Corporation** uses revenue from charitable gaming to support the local nursing home, fund improvements to the local hospital, and provide economic incentives for local businesses. These dollars are helping sustain their local community and helping local businesses thrive.

Charitable gaming is about taking care of our most vulnerable, providing opportunities for youth sports and other activities in communities that otherwise wouldn't have the opportunity, funding for your veteran's groups, and funding critical public safety needs are just a few examples.

Charitable gaming promotes local control by providing funding to local community non-profits while having a positive impact on local entities.

What does this bill do?

- Restricts payout percentages on the electronic pull tabs to 88%. Tribal entities do not have any payout restrictions. Electronic devices at tribal casinos can pay 99.9%. This is trying to entice players away from local bars to much higher prizes at tribal casinos.
- This bill restricts electronic machines to 10 by law. This is a regulatory issue, and currently has regulatory limitations. Tribal casinos do not have any limits on the number of machines, table games or other devices they may operate.
- Re-creates a complicated multi-tiered gaming tax system that ND legislators have been getting away from. There is a tax bill in the house that CGAND supports and includes similar provisions, including gaming addiction funding and enforcement monies to local cities and counties for enforcement.

CGAND urges a Do Not Pass recommendation on SB 2309.

Over the past 40 years North Dakota legislators and charities have built out a responsible system for charitable gaming that puts charitable organizations first, is well-regulated, and beneficial to local communities.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration and a **Do Not Pass recommendation on SB 2309.**