

SB 2373 – In Opposition

House Judiciary Committee

Submitted by Janelle Mitzel, Development Homes, Inc.

March 5th, 2025

Chairman Klemin & Committee Members,

Development Homes, Inc. (DHI) is in opposition to SB 2373. This bill restricts gaming operations to **permanent** 21 years of age and older areas, and has unforeseen effects for small-town rural bars, fraternal clubs, veterans clubs, and local community event centers located throughout North Dakota.

Development Homes, Inc. (DHI):

- DHI is a non-profit organization in Grand Forks providing community-based support services to persons with disabilities from all over ND.
- DHI has residential services including seven group homes, two duplex facilities, a multi-unit autism living center, two transitional living centers and multiple independent living settings.
- DHI provides vocational services including job training and placement, and family services including respite care and in-home support.
- DHI serves approximately two hundred individuals from children to adults, serving through all stages of life.
- DHI is currently the 12th largest employer in Grand Forks, employing 450 to 500 people. Our economic footprint is vital to this community.

Negative Effects of SB 2373:

- Bingo is operated regularly in banquet and community areas in small town bar/cafes, fraternal clubs, veterans clubs and community centers. Offering paper pull tabs, electronic pull tabs, and sports pools in conference and community areas would no longer be allowed if this bill passes. Bingo in rural ND cannot survive without pull tabs.
- Poker tournaments would not be allowed in common areas of veterans and fraternal clubs, community centers, banquet areas and rural café/bars. Poker tournaments are played in big common areas to accommodate larger sized crowds. Passage of this bill will eliminate the ability for most organizations to offer poker events in their communities.
- Customers would not be allowed to purchase pull tabs and open at tables in community and common areas, and café seating. Small town café/bars and veterans and fraternal clubs have shared seating areas that are used for multiple purposes.
- Blackjack and paddlewheel tables would not be allowed in the shared common areas and could not be used for dining or general seating for public events.

This bill will significantly hurt rural café/bars, veterans and fraternal clubs and local community centers.

Development Homes, Inc. urges a **Do Not Pass on SB 2373**.