



## Benefiting North Dakota Communities through Charitable Gaming

**February 7, 2023**

### **Testimony in SUPPORT of House Bill 1296**

Chairman Louser and Members of the Industry, Business and Labor Committee:

I'm Scott Meske, representing the North Dakota Gaming Alliance and on behalf of the 152 Members of the NDGA, we offer our support for House Bill 1296.

ND Gaming Alliance represents all facets of the charitable gaming industry. Veteran and Fraternal Organizations, Charities, Hospitality, Manufacturers, and Distributors. Since the laws governing charitable gaming were created, charities and the hospitality industry have worked together under a microscope. The licensed organization must petition the local governing body WITH the proposed gaming site. It is a joint effort, ultimately with the goal of providing valuable charitable donations within that community.

There have been instances however when the local authority denies the local license to the gaming site and the selected charity. While the local political subdivision does have the authority to restrict gaming within its jurisdiction, House Bill 1296 merely states that the local authority cannot deny the gaming site and charity's application without cause.

This prevents the local governing body from picking and choosing which charity will be approved for charitable gaming in a given establishment. To repeat, it is the gaming site that makes the determination which charity can operate in their establishment.

We strongly support the process of selecting charitable gaming sites as it stands today. And we are ardent supporters of the local governing body's ability to make the final determination *where* charitable gaming should be conducted in their own communities (See HB 1484).

However in terms of which charity should operate in those sites, we believe that should be left up to that establishment's owner. When charitable gaming was authorized by the State, the



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intent was to benefit the charities and nonprofits in our local communities. In the last biennium more than \$73 million has been disbursed into North Dakota's community causes because of charitable gaming.

The North Dakota Gaming Alliance respectfully asks that HB 1296 be given a DO PASS recommendation from this Committee.

Thank you.