

Testimony in Support of HB 1296

Senate Judiciary Committee

Submitted by Kraig Rygg

March 27th, 2023

Chairman Larson & Committee members, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in favor of HB 1296, addressing the Charitable Gaming Site Authorization process. For over 30 years a process has been followed, and recently has changed with a new interpretation of the law, essentially removing the will of the private sector.

I have been involved with ownership of liquor establishments and also worked with charitable gaming for over 25 years. My family owned and operated a bar in the Grand Forks area for many years, and now I am the proprietor of two GF liquor establishments. As a private business owner I have concerns with the possibility of local municipalities dictating terms of my business dealings and contractual agreements.

1. Bar owners base their contracts on gaming services provided by the organization, reputation and reliability of the organization, different game types offered, the relationship between the owner and organization, and the ability of the organization to adapt to customer and business needs of the site. I reserve the right to determine who can effectively work within my business, and with the business model of my business.
2. Cities/counties should not determine what organization shall operate in a private sector establishment, without the consent of the private owner. This is interference by government into the private sector.
3. Cities cannot determine what is in the best interest of my business, only I can do that. If cities are selecting gaming organizations for my locations their criteria will be vastly different than mine. If cities are selecting charities for particular sites, it will be in the interest of the city, not the bar owner.
4. I entered into private business so I have the ability to make choices within my business, without government intervention. North Dakota is a promoter of private rights, private businesses and limited government. Cities having the ability to dictate terms of my business is not promoting the rights of private businesses and is contradictory to long-standing North Dakota practices.
5. If this issue is not addressed I anticipate gaming site authorizations becoming highly politicized. I certainly hope we don't have to vet local community candidates based on their favorite charitable causes.

Thank you for your consideration of a **Do Pass** on HB 1296.

Kraig Rygg, Grand Forks