



Sweet Crude Travel Center, LLC  
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March 27, 2023

Members of the North Dakota State Senate Judiciary Committee:

My name is Brett Narloch and I support HB 1484. I am an owner and Managing Partner of Sweet Crude Travel Center, a truck stop, bar, and restaurant located at the intersection of US Highway 85 and ND Highway 200, by Grassy Butte. Since the debate has started about how to define a bar in the context of gaming, my business is usually listed in the news articles as one of the four gas stations that have e-tabs.

In previous testimony to this committee I went through all of the good things that gaming funds have been able to provide for first responders and firefighters in the Grassy Butte area of McKenzie County. Today I'll just speak to HB1484.

The North Dakota Attorney General's office has stated that it is seeking clarity from the Legislature regarding what a bar is so that it can properly regulate gaming. Deb McDaniel admitted to the Bismarck Tribune that SB2304 would still leave things subject to interpretation. HB1484 truly simplifies things for them.

If HB1484 becomes law, local communities can decide – as they always have – which businesses can receive an on sale liquor license. If a business receives one from their local governing body and it is otherwise an eligible site, the Attorney General's office simply issues the approval. All of the complicating factors that went into SB2304 disappear. They see the on sale liquor license. They approve.

If HB1484 becomes law, the details that SB2304 tries and fails to address will be addressed at the local level where governing bodies are closest to the people. Rural McKenzie County residents probably view this issue differently than Fargo residents.

Despite refusing to tell me how I ended up on the list of gas stations with gaming, my business has ended up on it none-the-less. It has been years now since e-tabs have been eligible to be placed around North Dakota, and the Attorney General has only been able to make a list of four gas stations that have them. And I certainly dispute my business being on the list.

This morning I read Ms. McDaniel's testimony opposing this bill. For you to believe that this will somehow mean e-tab machines will be in coffee shops all across North Dakota that means you would have to believe that local government will just start handing out on sale liquor licenses like candy. That defies everything we know about how local governments operate. If you give a coffee shop an on sale liquor license then they can serve alcohol. Local governments just do not allow that. The Attorney General's office knows that.

If required to get an on sale liquor license, stand alone gas stations and convenience stores will never become a hot spot for e-tabs. The cost of acquiring an on sale liquor license in most places is prohibitive. I have a stand alone convenience store in Washburn. I would have to pay \$25,000 to get an on sale liquor license. The benefits of having e-tabs in that store do not come close to justifying that type of investment. In bigger cities the cost of those licenses gets into the hundreds of thousands of dollars. No stand alone convenience store will pay that.

HB1484 provides clarity to the Attorney General and allows local communities to decide where they allow alcoholic beverages to be consumed.

I urge you to give this bill a Do Pass.

Thank you.

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Future of electronic pull tabs in North Dakota lawmakers' hands  
[https://bismarcktribune.com/community/mandannews/news/future-of-electronic-pull-tabs-in-north-dakota-lawmakers-hands/article\\_9fe42f00-c1cd-11ed-a100-afb1aa1b8453.html](https://bismarcktribune.com/community/mandannews/news/future-of-electronic-pull-tabs-in-north-dakota-lawmakers-hands/article_9fe42f00-c1cd-11ed-a100-afb1aa1b8453.html)

The Senate passed Klein's bill in a 35-12 vote, sending it to the House.

McDaniel said having the definition of a bar in state law rather than just in regulations would make it more secure. She likes the spirit of Klein's bill in that "it helps us interpret where gaming can be conducted and so does the other bill; however, the other bill shows that they want it in additional places."

Klein's bill also raises questions about restaurants, such as ones with a bar and ones with a bar and attached to a gas station.

"It's all in the interpretation," McDaniel said.

Klein's bill specifically excludes off-sale liquor stores, gas stations, grocery stores or convenience stores from the definition of a bar, but "I don't know if any of those items are actually defined in statute," McDaniel said.