



Testimony of Laura Lacher
Economic Development Association of North Dakota
In Opposition of SB 2035
January 13, 2025

Chairwoman Larson and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee:

My name is Laura Lacher, executive director of the Economic Development Association of North Dakota (EDND). I am submitting this testimony in opposition to SB 2035. EDND represents more than 80 economic development and tourism organizations across North Dakota that rely on charitable gaming funds to address community needs and improve quality of life.

While we support ensuring these funds are used appropriately, we believe the language in SB 2035 is too subjective and could create uncertainty for organizations that have a proven track record of managing funds responsibly. The bill risks disqualifying organizations that provide essential services in rural communities.

Charitable gaming funds have supported critical community programs such as childcare assistance, youth and adult education, workforce training, and community development initiatives. These initiatives provide meaningful assistance to rural communities by addressing basic needs, fostering economic stability, and ensuring everyone has the opportunity to succeed.

We urge the committee to consider the unintended consequences of this bill. Without access to charitable gaming funds, many of these essential services would be diminished or disappear, leaving communities with fewer resources to address pressing needs.

Thank you for your time and consideration. We respectfully ask for a Do Not Pass recommendation on SB 2035 to ensure these funds continue to support North Dakota communities.