



HB 1234. Senate Finance and Tax 3/15/21

Madam Chair Bell and members of the Senate Finance and Taxation committee

My name is Mike Motschenbacher. I am the Executive Director of the ND Gaming alliance. Our alliance represents all facets of the charitable gaming industry. Our members include charities, hospitality venues, fraternal organizations, veterans' organizations, manufacturers, and distributors.

Today I am submitting neutral testimony on HB 1234.

The way the bill is currently written, our organization is in opposition to it. We believe that without a two-year head start which was proposed in the original bill, this bill simply does not benefit North Dakota businesses and charities. If a bettor has a choice of sitting at home on their couch placing a bet on their smart phone rather than going to a bar/restaurant/fraternal organization to place their bets and thus having food and drink to support their local establishments, we find this bill no good for North Dakota. The two-year head start would give North Dakota an advantage over the out of state companies that would benefit from online betting in its current form for a period of two years which would make it worth the investment to bring these kiosks into their facilities. Without that advantage, we simply do not believe our members will invest in the technology. We also disagree with amendment that removed college sports. The argument that games could be fixed by players being "paid off" by bettors is simply not likely. In fact, it is more likely that out of state bettors from other states would be more apt to pay off players in attempt to "fix" a bet. This argument just does not hold any water.

However, it is our understanding that the amendments we supported earlier in the session which were stripped out of this bill by the House Judiciary committee are going to be presented in your committee today. If all the original amendments that were in the original bill are put back in, then this is a bill we could support. However, in its current form, we are opposed to this legislation.

Thank you for taking the time to read this testimony, and you can certainly reach out to me with any questions.

Mike Motschenbacher
Executive Director
ND Gaming Alliance
701-471-9014
Ndgalliance@gmail.com