

2025 SENATE JUDICIARY

SB 2288

2025 SENATE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Judiciary Committee
Peace Garden Room, State Capitol

SB 2288
1/28/2025

Relating to the payment of a veterans organization's club expenses with net proceeds from charitable gaming.
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10:02 a.m. Chair Larson opened the hearing.

Members present:

Chair Larson, Vice Chairman Paulson, Senators: Castaneda, Cory, Luick, Myrdal, Braunberger.

Discussion Topics:

- Percentage of proceeds to cover food and beverages
- Challenges of rising costs
- Donations to community projects
- Honoring Veterans and soldiers

10:02 a.m. Senator Dick Dever, District 32, introduced the bill and submitted testimony in favor #32017.

10:14 a.m. Scott Meske, Lobbyist for ND Gaming Alliance, testified in favor and submitted testimony #32008.

10:17 a.m. Former Representative Wayne A. Trottier, ND Legislative Branch, testified in favor.

10:24 a.m. Chris Ebertz, Charity Chairman of Bismarck VFW, testified in favor.

10:33 a.m. Fred Rios, Senior Vice Commander Post 1326 Bismarck VFW, testified in favor.

10:38 a.m. Alice Delzer, President of AMVETS Ladies Auxiliary, testified in favor.

10:42 a.m. Chair Larson closed the hearing.

10:44 a.m. Senator Paulson moved a Do Pass.

10:44 a.m. Senator Braunberger seconded the motion.

Senators	Vote
Senator Diane Larson	Y
Senator Bob Paulson	Y
Senator Ryan Braunberger	Y
Senator Jose L. Casteneda	Y
Senator Claire Cory	Y
Senator Larry Luick	Y
Senator Janne Myrdal	Y

Motion Passed 7-0-0.

10:46 a.m. Senator Cory will carry the bill.

10:46 a.m. Chair Larson closed the hearing.

Kendra McCann, Committee Clerk

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE
SB 2288 ([25.1291.01000](#))

Judiciary Committee (Sen. Larson, Chairman) recommends **DO PASS** (7 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSENT AND NOT VOTING). SB 2288 was placed on the Eleventh order on the calendar. This bill does not affect workforce development.



Benefiting North Dakota Communities through Charitable Gaming

Testimony in SUPPORT of Senate Bill 2288

January 28, 2025

Madam Chair Larson and Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee:

I'm Scott Meske, representing the North Dakota Gaming Alliance and on behalf of the 178 Members of the NDGA, we offer our support for Senate Bill 2288.

SB 2288 would allow veterans organizations that conduct gaming to use 20% of their net proceeds to offset some of their food and beverage costs. As many of you may know, some veterans organizations are really struggling to stay open. These clubs are a staple for our veterans. Rising costs are really making it difficult to continue to operate these facilities. These clubs give our veterans who fought for and served our country a place to get together, enjoy meals and share stories. Our veterans are in need, and this is the least we can do to help them.

Currently, there are 51 veterans' organizations with gaming licenses in North Dakota, but only a few of those still operate clubs. They will still be required to donate the rest to charitable causes, which they have done so greatly over the past many years. Let's show our veterans that we continue to support them by voting yes on SB 2288. There are some people in the room that I believe will be speaking more to the matter, and they can share their individual stories and issues they are facing.

Thank you and with that I would stand for any questions.

Testimony for SB 2288
Veterans Club Expenses from Gaming Funds
Senator Dick Dever

Madam Chair, members of the committee, for the record, I am Dick Dever, Senator from District 32. I am also serving in my third year as Commander of Bismarck Amvets Post 9, and as Judge Advocate for VFW Post 1326.

I joined the VFW long enough ago that I don't carry my membership card because it stops me at metal detectors. I joined the VFW first because the name is on the VFW All Seasons Arena here in Bismarck and on the playground at Solheim Elementary School. They donated a lot of money to both projects; all from gaming funds.

Veterans organizations are struggling with dwindling numbers. At one time, the American Legion had a Club in Bismarck. The VFW struggled with a large facility and downsized and later closed. The Amvets has the only Veterans Club in town and is struggling to stay in business.

The Amvets Club would not exist without gaming and gaming would not exist without the Club. When a Club closes the Post suffers.

SB 2288 proposes to allow Veterans organizations to use up to 20% of the net proceeds from gaming for the costs of food and beverages in the operation of the Club. This would give those existing clubs a fighting chance to stay open and might enable those who have closed their clubs to reopen.

20% was an arbitrary figure. It was suggested that I introduce the bill at 50%. I thought that to be ambitious. If you would like to increase the number, I would be most supportive. The organizations are non-profit organizations. We can't continue to sustain losses, but we are still non-profit and would only use the necessary amount.

Why veterans organizations and why limit this to veterans organizations? By their existence, veterans organizations provide a patriotic, charitable, community service.

Deb McDaniels neither supports nor opposes this bill but suggested the language in a way that it can be controlled and regulated.

Why is the continuing viability of veteran's organizations necessary? In discussing the new Military Museum being considered, General Dohrmann talks about the rich military history of service by North Dakotans.

I add to that the fact that this country began its existence as an exercise in self-government. It has existed, does exist, and will only continue to exist, if and to the extent that its citizens recognize their responsibility to it.

Veterans provide honor guards at the funerals of veterans. Those honor guards serve in flag ceremonies at community events and in our schools. They promote civic responsibility to students and serve as living history of our nation's wars. The Amvets Department (State)

provides pocket Constitutions to every 8th grade student in the state in September.

This is an important bill in support of important community organizations that promote important values to keep our country strong.

I urge your favorable consideration of the bill. Thank you.

2025 HOUSE JUDICIARY

SB 2288

2025 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Judiciary Committee
Room JW327B, State Capitol

SB 2288
3/12/2025

A BILL for an Act to create and enact a new subsection to section 53-06.1-11.1 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to the payment of a veterans organization's club expenses with net proceeds from charitable gaming.

10:32 a.m. Chairman Klemin opened the hearing.

Members Present: Chairman Klemin, Vice-Chairman Karls, Representatives Christianson, Henderson, Hoverson, Johnston, S. Olson, Satrom, Tveit, VanWinkle, Wolff, Schneider

Members Absent: Vice-Chairman Vetter, Representative McLeod

Discussion Topics:

- Veteran organizations with gaming sites
- Allocation of North Dakota charitable gaming funds
- Closure of North Dakota veterans organization sites

10:33 a.m. Senator Dick Dever, North Dakota Senator for District 32, introduced the bill.

10:41 a.m. Wayne Trottier, Member of the VFW, American Legion, AMVETS, and 40&8, testified in favor and provided testimony #40988.

10:51 a.m. Senator Dick Dever, North Dakota Senator for District 32, answered committee questions.

10:54 a.m. Chris Ebertz, Chairman of the Charity Committee and Trustee Committee for the North Dakota VFW Post 1326, testified in favor.

11:01 a.m. Scott Meske, North Dakota Gaming Alliance, testified in favor.

11:04 a.m. Chairman Klemin closed the hearing.

Wyatt Armstrong, Committee Clerk

GOOD MORNING CHAIRMAN
KLEMIN AND HOUSE JUDICIARY COMMITTEE

My name is Wayne Trottier, I am a member of the VFW, American Legion, and AMVETS, and 40&8, and I've served as chaplain of the VFW, American Legion, and the AMVETS organizations

Many people have told me that if we want more of the gaming funds for post use, why shouldn't every organization get to use more of their gambling funds

Probably the big issue is what veteran organizations stand for.

First of all, most people aren't aware of the oath that all soldiers and all veterans take when they enter the military. It is very similar to what politicians take, when it comes to the constitution and the rights and freedoms of all America. The big difference is that when military enter the service and say their oath, they promise to uphold & defend the constitution and protect the rights & freedoms of the American people, but they end their oath, "with my life", and every veteran believes in this, and when we think about it in the 20th century, that being 1900–2000, over 1 million American soldiers gave their lives for countries halfway around the world, so that these countries could have the rights and freedoms that we enjoy in the United States. No other organization has such an oath.

I would like to believe that all OF NORTH DAKOTA as well as the NORTH DAKOTA LEGISLATURE would support our veterans.

To be upfront, I am a Vietnam era veteran, but never served on the ground in Vietnam. However, I have total respect for all those that have served overseas, with "boots on the ground". Again, so that all Americans can appreciate & enjoy the rights & freedoms, and for all of these things that we enjoy today.

Many of our veterans today, deal with issues that they came home with from the Combat experience. Many suffer from PTSD, physical injuries, and many memories that they deal with daily. Probably one of the biggest issues today, is those that served in Vietnam, and affected by Agent Orange. Every organization I have been a member of, I have seen many many veterans that are both disabled and have passed away from Agent Orange, during my time. The VA and the Federal government did not recognize agent orange health issues for over 25 years after the United States left Vietnam

With all of these things in mind, I feel the veteran organizations, that have gaming, deserve

to keep more of the gaming funds, to support their posts.

However, when a POST closes, communities most likely lose their celebration days like Memorial Day, Veteran's day, Military funerals & Military burials (the 21 gun salute and the TAPS)

Another point is, it will not cost the people of North Dakota one cent, or affect the North Dakota Legislative budget!!!

I thank you for your attention and stand for any questions you may have.

There may be detail questions, that would refer to Director Deb McDaniel

2025 HOUSE STANDING COMMITTEE MINUTES

Judiciary Committee
Room JW327B, State Capitol

SB 2288
3/12/2025

A BILL for an Act to create and enact a new subsection to section 53-06.1-11.1 of the North Dakota Century Code, relating to the payment of a veterans organization's club expenses with net proceeds from charitable gaming.

2:53 p.m. Chairman Klemin opened the hearing.

Members Present: Chairman Klemin, Vice-Chairman Karls, Vice-Chairman Vetter, Representatives Christianson, Henderson, Hoverson, Johnston, McLeod, S. Olson, Satrom, Tveit, VanWinkle, Wolff, Schneider

Discussion Topics:

- Committee action

2:54 p.m. Representative S. Olson moved a Do Pass.

2:54 p.m. Representative Johnston seconded the motion.

Representatives	Vote
Representative Lawrence R. Klemin	Y
Representative Karen Karls	Y
Representative Steve Vetter	Y
Representative Nels Christianson	Y
Representative Donna Henderson	Y
Representative Jeff Hoverson	Y
Representative Daniel Johnston	Y
Representative Carrie McLeod	Y
Representative SuAnn Olson	Y
Representative Bernie Satrom	Y
Representative Mary Schneider	Y
Representative Bill Tveit	Y
Representative Lori VanWinkle	Y
Representative Christina Wolff	Y

2:56 p.m. Motion passed 14-0-0.

2:56 p.m. Representative Johnston will carry the bill.

2:56 p.m. Chairman Klemin closed the hearing.

Wyatt Armstrong, Committee Clerk

REPORT OF STANDING COMMITTEE
SB 2288 ([25.1291.01000](#))

Judiciary Committee (Rep. Klemin, Chairman) recommends **DO PASS** (14 YEAS, 0 NAYS, 0 ABSENT OR EXCUSED AND NOT VOTING). SB 2288 was placed on the Fourteenth order on the calendar.