
From: Dan P <willhunting13@gmail.com>
Sent: Monday, May 8, 2017 1:15 PM
To: SGGA Exhibits
Subject: Testimony submission on HB2190 (SGGA committee hearing 1PM 5/10)

Dear Senators,

I am writing today to ask you to please take the time to dig into HB2190 which would limit Oregon Social Gaming to exclusively venues controlled by a "charitable, fraternal or religious organization", hence prohibiting Social Gaming in private clubs.

Slamming the doors shut on our State's private social gaming clubs will not only severely restrict the leisure activity of Texas Hold'em enjoyed by hundreds, if not thousands, of Oregonians but, more importantly eliminate the jobs held by cooks, wait staff, bartenders and volunteer dealers at these clubs.

I encourage you to follow the trail of this bill's introduction and I am quite confident it will lead you ultimately to the doorstep of the casinos in La Center, WA. They backed this EXACT same proposed wording change with LC 3928 in 2013's session and failed then. They feel threatened by Portland's clubs and want to drive players north of the Columbia to play in their rooms where the house "rakes" a percentage of each pot which is not returned to the players. It is notable that no such percentage rake exists in Oregon's poker rooms, whose revenues are generated solely on daily cover charges and food and beverage sales.

At the very least, please do not accept as gospel the wild accusations made by Representative Evans on the House Floor as to how these clubs operate and how much money they make. My jaw hit the floor upon hearing how erroneous some of these were. If you have any doubts, I encourage you to please contact Brian Sarchi who runs the Portland Meadows room, who I am sure would welcome a dialogue with you and has nothing to hide.

Have you, in all your years serving our state, heard a single complaint from a constituent about the operation of private Social Gaming clubs in the state? While possible, I would guess the answer is no. I spend many a night of leisure at Portland Meadows. There will always be exceptions to a rule, but an overwhelming majority of players AND employees seem quite happy that rooms such as the one at Portland Meadows exist.

To be fair, there may indeed exist an issue as to how dealers are compensated for their role essential to the integrity of the games. I understand that the clubs are currently working with their respective cities to iron out those wrinkles. However, I am sure you will agree it to be a dramatic overreaction to this solvable problem for the clubs to be shuttered statewide.

As we all know, these are trying times for our democracy. There are important battles to be fought at every turn - ones that often pit the desires/needs of one group of your constituents against another subset of your constituents. Fortunately, HB2190 does not seem to be one of those. Our social gaming clubs are one of few places I can think of where red Oregonians and blue Oregonians actually interact socially without a police barricade set up between them! Please don't let the wishes of some Washington corporations take that away from us! Please vote no on HB2190.

Thank you for your time taken to read this and your continued service to our state.

Most sincerely,
Daniel Pasko
Lake Oswego