
From: Darrel Plant <dplant@moshplant.com>
Sent: Monday, May 8, 2017 10:10 PM
To: SGGA Exhibits
Subject: Senate Committee On General Government and Accountability - HB2190

Dear Senators,

I'd like to urge you to vote NO with regard to referring HB 2190 (Relating to social gaming) to the full Senate.

First, the bill is aimed at closing social gaming poker clubs in the City of Portland by the operators of card rooms in La Center, Washington who have viewed Oregon businesses as poaching on their turf. A legal challenge to the card rooms was turned down last year by the Oregon Supreme Court because Washington businesses were deemed to have no standing; this is another attempt by them to stifle what they see as competition in Portland, but it would affect the entire state of Oregon.

Second, despite the sensational image plied by HB2190's supporters, the poker rooms in Portland are remarkably safe and egalitarian places. Through several years of playing in them, I've come to know lawyers, line cooks, and retirees, and players from a wide diversity of ethnic backgrounds. You sit at a table for a few hours with eight other randomly-selected people, all brought together by an interest in a game and that's pretty social.

Third, Oregon's poker rooms specialize in a type of competition called multi-table tournaments (MTTs). Venues like Final Table and Portland Meadows Poker Room have two or three tournaments a day, where players put in a set amount of money and play until they are eliminated, with all money contributed by the players going back to the players. Proponents of HB2190 like Last Frontier Casino have two tournaments per week, because their primary interest is in cash games, where they take a little bit of money from every hand of poker played. Because of this, Oregon poker rooms have started to produce some very skilled players, including a Vancouver kindergarten teacher who won half a million dollars last summer at the World Series of Poker (WSOP) in Las Vegas, after honing her poker tournament-playing skills at a pub near my home in SE Portland. I was working at the WSOP last summer as a writer, and was about forty feet away covering another tournament when Lisa Meredith was battling two other players for the chance to win a million dollars. It was one of the feel-good stories of the summer, but HB2190 would likely mean the end of something like that

happening again, all because a Washington state business wants a monopoly on poker in the Portland metro area.

There are most decidedly issues regarding the operation of the social gaming poker clubs in Portland (and Eugene, and Bend and elsewhere in Oregon) that need to be addressed, but the clubs are either illegal now or they aren't. Clubs have been working with their various municipalities to operate within the social gaming rules each municipality has set. They've shown willingness to comply with the laws and regulations. Changing the law to satisfy the whims of out-of-state businesses isn't the proper path.

Thank you for your consideration, please vote against passing HB2190 on from the committee.

Sincerely,

Darrel Plant

ARTICLES:

"Portland, Oregon: The Cancellation of Pokerlandia", PokerNews

<https://www.pokernews.com/news/2016/09/the-cancellation-of-pokerlandia-25757.htm>

"Kindergarten teacher lands \$500,000 playing poker", CNBC

<http://www.cnbc.com/2016/06/15/kindergarten-teacher-lands-500000-playing-poker.html>

"The Kindergarten Teacher Who Might Be a Millionaire", PocketFives

<https://www.pocketfives.com/articles/wsop-kindergarten-teacher-who-might-become-millionaire-592336/>

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"Like George McGovern, a humble, self-effacing, egomaniac." -- Darrel Plant
