

5/9/2017

Dear Senator,

Please VOTE AGAINST HB 2190 (the anti-social gaming bill).

There are thousands of Oregonians that enjoy playing poker in social gaming rooms each week.

**1. SOCIAL GAMING ROOMS IN OREGON are SAFE, DIVERSE, AND PROFESSIONALLY RUN**

Oregon currently has among the SAFEST, most PROFESSIONAL, BEST poker rooms anywhere in the country under social gaming. It's no surprise that world champions Greg Raymer and Huck Seed have played in social gaming rooms in Oregon in the past year.

**2. POKER WILL HAPPEN REGARDLESS. The end of social gaming will drive action to UNREGULATED, UNTAXED, UNDERGROUND poker rooms.**

By passing HB 2190, the thousands of people that enjoy playing poker for recreation, socialization, and mental competition, will turn to playing cards in underground rooms. Underground rooms are much less safe for players and less beneficial to society. This turns a legislative problem into a police one, passing the buck to our already over-burdened local police forces. And the legislature will be creating a whole new class of criminals from regular, good Oregonians that have been playing poker with each other for years.

**3. THERE IS A SOLUTION to address THE BOLI PROBLEM that DOESN'T END SOCIAL GAMING, and that CREATES JOBS**

The Oregon Bureau of Labor and Industries (BOLI) has found that "volunteer" dealers in certain social gaming establishments have conducted themselves in a manner akin to employment, and that these dealers deserve the compensation and workplace protections of employees. This creates a problem for the social gaming rooms because it is currently unlawful for them to employ dealers.

**THE SOLUTION:** Amend the social gaming statute so that it allows rooms to employ dealers and to pass that cost on to the players.

Social gaming rooms are different from casinos in that they don't benefit directly from the gaming occurring, as they take no money from the prize pool or any hand of poker played. Their only benefit is a small individual door fee and revenues from food and drinks sold. This basic tenet of social gaming could be kept the same, but with an addendum that the room be allowed to employ dealers and charge players an amount for that service.

So instead of criminalizing previously lawful behavior, and driving, safe, legal businesses underground, please consider writing a different bill. Amend the social gaming statute to allow rooms to employ dealers. Create jobs instead of destroying them. And be a hero to all the good Oregonians that enjoy America's great past time of poker. We have a wonderful, vibrant poker community in Oregon, and we will remember and reward you for your good actions. Thank you so much for your time and your efforts.

Sincerely,

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