

To: Senate Committee for SB 2190

Mr. Chairman and members of the committee, my name is Jon Putman. I am here to voice my strong opposition to SB 2190. There is NO good reason for this bill and it would not solve any of the current issues if social gaming was controlled by charitable, fraternal or religious organizations. I'm sure you have seen the Attorney General's opinion dated 2010 regarding social gaming. It is quite clear how contradictory and outdated the laws that govern social Gaming in Oregon truly are.

I ask you to make two decisions;

- 1.) VOTE NO ----to changes outlined in SB 2190 and delete the language proposed to be added to page 5 line 4 and 5 and line 16 and 18. That states "*premises operated and controlled by a charitable, fraternal or religious organization.*".
- 2.) Appoint a task force to develop policies and language to govern Social Gaming that will resolve the contradictory language in the current law and will resolve the myriad of issues and establish Social Gaming in Oregon as the positive industry it is and can be.
 - a. Propose representatives from the following stakeholder groups be included in this task force appointed by the legislature or Governor whichever is more appropriate
 - b. Poker Room Owners (3 from major markets urban and rural)
 - c. Dealer Representatives (2)
 - d. Casino Poker Rooms (2)
 - e. Players (4 from major markets- urban and rural)
 - f. Legislature Liaison (2 urban and rural)
 - g. City Regulator Representatives (2 urban and rural)
 - h. Legal/Oregon Statute Expertise (2)

Ensure that members also represent the diversity of typical tournament players so women, men, young, elderly, disabled, etc. are represented as part of the representatives listed above.

In addition, my hope is that when this task force is finished with their work social gaming and Tournament Texas Hold-em will be better understood. It will not be listed in the same category as other non-skill Casino gambling games where the House always wins. I find it interesting that ORS 167 statute that governs Social Gaming is titled Offenses against General Welfare and Animals. *It states; Casino game" means any of the traditional gambling-based games commonly known as dice, faro, monte, roulette, fan-tan, twenty-one, blackjack, Texas hold-'em, seven-and-a-half, big injun, klondike, craps, poker, chuck-a-luck, Chinese chuck-a-luck (dai shu), wheel of fortune, chemin de fer, baccarat, pai gow, beat the banker, panquinqui, red dog, acey-deucey, or any other gambling-based game similar in form or content.*

California has avowed that poker passes the "preponderance test" and is therefore a game of skill. That does not mean that luck is not involved, but does mean that poker is not like other casino games where participants play against the house.

My story

I am a fourth-generation Oregonian. I am retired but spent my career working in the energy and public transportation industry. When I was one I contracted a severe case of polio which changed my life forever. This disability relegated me to the role of observationist. I am very good at observation but obviously would prefer to participate. I enjoy competitive sports and I am an avid sports fan. I enjoy card games and can play almost any game, checkers, chess, rummy, cribbage, you name it, however none of them fulfill that desire I have to participate in a competitive sport. Until... I found Tournament Texas Hold-em. Nothing prior to my experience playing tournament Texas Hold-em ever created the feeling of playing center field in baseball, or being footballs starting quarter back or a point guard on a basketball team. But when I found Texas Hold-em I found what I had been looking for and for the first time in my life was on an equal playing field with able bodied participants. At the table we are equal, we are all the same as we sit around that table. Texas Hold-em tournaments have all the elements of a big play-off game when 500 or in some places 6000 people come together to play one single game to determine a champion. In addition, the diversity of the people who play Tournament Texas Hold-em is astounding and I have truly enjoyed meeting and interacting with people who I would never have had the opportunity to meet and who quite honestly probably would not have had any desire to meet or interact with me.

I don't think the average person who isn't familiar with Tournament Texas Hold-em realizes the amount of physical stamina, mental focus, mathematics, and overall understanding of human nature and of the opposition. My good friend Marc Kane is the director of a senior center in southern Oregon. He told me the other day that he never realized the true value of Bingo to seniors and people with disabilities. As he watched seniors come together and socialize and play the game, he noticed how it kept their minds active, it got them out of their houses where they many times were alone, it kept them active and provided so many benefits to people as they age. Tournament Texas Hold-em offers the same type of benefits. These are just a few of the factors that make Texas Hold-em the unique competitive sport that it is. In my world it is MY Sport. Please don't take the only competitive sport I can play away.

I have spent 25 years working in the City of Portland to better enhance transportation options for seniors and people with disabilities. That experience has made it absolutely clear to me that if Oregon poker rooms are closed and the only option is fraternal or charitable organizations. It will be discriminatory to people with disabilities. We will not have the same access to professional run games in a safe and clean environment .

Thank you for your time