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Legislative Testimony
Veterans and Legal Affairs Committee
Milton F. Champion III – Executive Director
Gambling Control Unit
Department of Public Safety
March 24, 2025, 9:30 am, Room 437, State House

Senator Hickman, Representative Supica and Distinguished Members of the Veterans and Legal Affairs Committee:

I am Milton Champion, Executive Director of the Gambling Control Unit within the Department of Public Safety. I am here today on behalf of the Department of Public Safety to testify “Against” LD 1086 which is An Act to Remove State Requirements for Nonprofits on Raffles and Internet Raffles with Prizes of \$2,500 or less.

This bill allows nonprofit organizations to conduct raffles and Internet raffles in which the prize or prizes does not exceed \$2,500 without having to register with the Department of Public Safety, Gambling Control Unit.

As with my previous testimony on LD 863, our position is the same. Any game of chance should be registered, whether there is a fee or not, so that inspections can be completed for compliance. From 2018 to 2020, violations from one inspector for the entire state went from half a dozen annually to six times that number from 2021 to 2023 with two inspectors. Those findings have reduced in 2024 demonstrating that additional staff aid in compliance with games offered to eligible organization’s members and the public. Those violations were dealt with by educational letters of guidance and no formal disciplinary actions by the Unit. From 2019 to date, we have received 199 emails and 168 voice messages regarding charitable gaming operations. This does not include daily phone conversations from eligible organizations.

Internet raffles are a separate issue all together and have been dealt with appropriately in prior legislative sessions with licensed internet operators or the use of a payment management system. Some of the charitable inspector findings in 2024 of games not registered or operated over the internet include, but are not limited to:

12 Bingo Games
125 Raffles
2 Casino Nights
25 Sealed Ticket games
60 Super bowl and Kentucky Derby squares
26 Slot Machines- being sold over the internet

Charitable gaming activity is by far the most time-consuming area of regulatory oversight for the Unit. In order to effectively inspect the 493 eligible organizations just once a year with the ability to inspect 5 organizations a week or 130 a year, we would need two more inspectors and as such we would respectfully request two more charitable inspectors to any charitable legislation. In addition, we would request an Office Specialist to better oversee and assist organizations in applying for and reporting legal events and scheduling inspections for compliance.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before the committee today, and I would be happy to answer any questions you may have at this time.

Respectfully,