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**Senate File 1949**, Sports Gambling. Sen. Klein, Commerce and Consumer Protection committee. I **support** the **agreement** with the Native Tribes that is written in **SF1949**.

I thank you for the opportunity to express my views regarding the Sports Gambling Bill. It is a bill that has clearly created emotions. Emotions that include racism.

Back around 1492 European travelers started to come to this country for their benefit only. Native Americans were pushed aside, many were killed along with their buffalo. The statement, "a good Indian is a dead Indian" was common, believed and was the reality for the Original People.

In 1776 our new country was officially founded with a Constitution designed by white men, for the betterment of white men. This means that most of us in this room, simply due to our Euro-American heritage continue to unfairly benefit from founding and subsequent law. The Native Tribal Nations were not represented. Their Sovereign Nation status was discounted and ignored.

This advantage continues today, through many legal means, including voting rights, land allotment, mining rights and many other violations of sovereignty. Racism, under the guise of preservation of power, economic status and privilege result in many decisions made without considered input, much less the deserved guidance from our Indigenous Sovereign Nations.

An example many of us witnessed in our lifetime, is the attitude of some individuals when it comes to fishing rights for Native Americans. I assume all here have seen news clips or documentaries over the years regarding this issue. The views expressed and rationale for those views are basically the same when it comes to the Native Tribes and gambling rights. That isn't a secret. Don't kid yourself.

An agreement was made here in Minnesota recognizing the Native Tribes exclusive rights to gambling in Minnesota. There are individuals who continue the attempt to chip away at the value of the exclusive gambling rights of our Native Tribes. These rights have provided and continue to provide needed income, self-reliance, and more than survival but an opportunity for the Tribes to thrive. A small, painless step towards compensation for the significant unfair loss of land, loss of habitat and therefore loss of means to maintain lifestyle and culture.

And the beat goes on! Here and now in 2024 there are those who want to effectively break the gambling agreement and slowly take apart what has been agreed upon, continuing the legacy of dismissing, ignoring, and removing sovereign rights of Native Americans.

Last fall, a Star Tribune, MPR News, Kare 11 Minnesota Poll found that 48% of Minnesotans said betting on sports should be legal here, while 33% said it should not be. About 1 in 5 Minnesotans were undecided on the issue. From what I personally heard, the people who were undecided about gambling or perhaps said no, are concerned that we would turn Minnesota into a mini Nevada. Does that fit in the values of Minnesota? No. Having it controlled and in limited locations was the message conveyed to me. Please do not add amendments to this bill that allows electronic gambling everywhere, against the wishes of most Minnesotans.

Our neighbor states, North Dakota, South Dakota and Wisconsin only allow sports gambling in casinos, or on land owned by American Indian Tribes. They have got it right. Can we maintain it right as well?

Why is it that when Running Aces doesn't do a solid feasibility study on harness racing in Minnesota, they think that someone else should bail them out and give them a piece of the pie of sports gambling proceeds, as they put it? If a feasibility study was done, then it wasn't presented very well, and the ownership groups didn't understand the business they entered. They say that they are qualified to run sports gambling as they have placed many bets over the years. Yet they can't handle the big bet of launching the business of opening the track, which opened deep in debt with no successful end in sight as of 2024.

Running Aces is owned by a hedge fund group located in Connecticut. Its only existence and purpose is to make money. Are they entitled to share in the success of the Native Community here in Minnesota? I personally don't have much love for hedge fund groups especially for one that is located in Connecticut of all places. They put themselves in debt, and it's not the Native Communities', nor the state of Minnesota's responsibility to bail them out.

You can't blame the fact that they are deep in debt due to high gas prices and the lack of a card license for a few months as they have said.

Running Aces should have never been built in the first place.

The Minneapolis Tribune reported on September 17, 2023, that Canterbury Downs is hurting as the number of horses racing and also the birth of foals born in Minnesota is down. This is a nationwide problem, not just a Minnesota problem. Therefore the same horses are winning week after week for the most part.

I am concerned about the real motive of Canterbury Downs. The real question is: What is the plan should horse racing not make it? Would they relinquish gambling rights when the local live horse racing business shuts down? Or would they attempt to expand on the gambling rights that are currently controlled by the Native Community? This is something that must not take place. We can't allow even a small crack in the wall to expand gambling. This will lead to exploding that wall in the future without a doubt.

Expanding gambling is not in the best interest of Minnesotans nor with the agreement with the Native Tribes.

Furthermore, why are we even thinking of giving money to a private ownership group to bail out their business so they can make more money? If that is Minnesota's practice, then I'm going to open a business and have Minnesota finance me as well to keep me flush.

To ignore the sports gambling issue is a mistake. It's here, not in Minnesota necessarily, but the ads are here promoting gambling ventures in neighboring states. It is in 38 states nationwide and growing.

Between Iowa, Wisconsin, North Dakota, and South Dakota there are 12 gambling sites near our border. They are happy we aren't doing anything at all when it comes to sports gambling. Minnesota's drive to those sites and potential revenue is lost. Minnesotans lose money. In those states nothing is set aside for those who have become gambling addicts or need help. Other states aren't going to help people of Minnesota with addiction.

Nationwide, many legislators are concerned that an estimated 64 billion dollars is illegally spent on sports gambling each year according to the AGA. Gambling is here in some way, shape or form. When I say I am opposed to the expansion of gambling in Minnesota, I really mean we need to control it by allowing specific sites to handle gambling. This is a better way to get a grip on the issue.

I and many others don't want to turn Minnesota into a mini-Nevada. That can easily happen if electronic casino type devices are allowed unrestricted all over Minnesota. The Tribes can handle sports gambling with their strong and successful business experience. I am continually baffled by our lack of conscience regarding our relationship with our Indigenous Relatives. Why do we not want to honor our past agreements made to the Minnesota Tribes by allowing them to control gambling in Minnesota? Are we going to take that away from them too, and continue insulting them, as so many treaties and agreements have been violated in the past? Let us make a change today!

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Respectfully, I thank you for your time.

Paul Tuveson