

Issue: Senate File 4474: A bill for prohibiting online sweepstakes games

Rationale: To prevent new forms of gambling that try to evade existing laws in Minnesota.

American Legion Department of Minnesota testimony:

The posts of The American Legion Department of Minnesota that conduct charitable gambling stand in favor of SF4474. There are 188 posts and three Auxiliary units with gambling licenses, the largest segment of any organization in Minnesota involved in charitable gambling.

They all agree they would rather see customers playing legal forms of gambling such as electronic pulltabs than shady forms of online gambling on personal cellphones. With sweepstakes casinos, the state receives no revenue and the charities receive no revenue. With e-pulltabs, the state and charities receive revenue. We are in it together.

Forms of illegal gambling already are banned in bars and restaurants in Minnesota. However, it is nearly impossible to determine what customers are doing on their personal cellphones. Preventing internet sweepstakes casinos would align with intent and spirit of existing Minnesota laws on gambling. It also protects customers.

With sweepstakes casinos, there's no guarantees of payment, no guarantees of fairness, no likely way of getting money back if wronged and no way to know what your wager is supporting.

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