Jewish Community Relations Council of MN and the Dakotas
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March 23, 2026

Joint Religious Legislative Coalition
P.O. Box 4233
Saint Paul, MN 55104

Dear Chair Klein and members of the Senate Commerce and Consumer Protection Committee,

I am writing on behalf of the Joint Religious Legislative Coalition in support of SF4474 (Rasmusson), which would ban sweepstakes casinos in Minnesota. The Joint Religious Legislative Coalition (JRLC) is a state-wide coalition formed through the partnership of our three sponsoring faith organizations: the Minnesota Catholic Conference, the Jewish Community Relations Council of Minnesota and the Dakotas, and the Minnesota Council of Churches. As people of faith, we advocate alongside our neighbors of differing religious backgrounds to address poverty, uphold the dignity of overlooked communities, and mitigate societal harm. We believe that sweepstakes casinos pose a significant threat to public well-being in our state, and we thank Sen. Rasmusson for introducing SF4474 to address this issue.

Online gambling is not legal in Minnesota; however, these sweepstakes casinos are attempting to make an end run around our state's regulators by relying on "dual currency," in the form of coins, for wagering. Proponents argue that this layer of separation means games do not constitute gambling because these coins are given to participants at no cost and therefore actual money is not being wagered. However, if players wish to continue their gameplay time, they must purchase more time to then be awarded additional play coins, essentially paying for additional chances to win coins which can be traded in for real money or prizes.

The use of dual currency does not make sweepstakes casinos "not gambling." These platforms rely on familiarity with the games offered through regulated, in-person gambling to attract users. They are simply online casinos with an additional step between putting down money and collecting winnings. In fact, dual currency can create additional harm by creating a false perception of how much money is being lost, as players see the coins depleting rather than the money spent to acquire them. Combine the online nature of sweepstakes casinos with the types of games they offer, and the result is that every phone in our state can effectively become a slot machine, posing a significant risk to individuals prone to compulsive gambling.

We urge you to vote in favor of banning online sweepstakes casinos in our state to protect our citizens from the impacts of unregulated online gambling. Thank you for your consideration of SF4474.

Sincerely,

Leah Patton
Executive Director, Joint Religious Legislative Coalition