



Bowling Centers Association of Ohio

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House Finance Committee

Chairman Scott Oelslager & Ranking Member Jack Cera

Thursday, May 30, 2019

HB 194 – Sports Gaming @ Casinos, Racinos & Fraternal Clubs

Opponent Testimony by

Joe Poelking, President & CEO – Poelking Entertainment Network (Dayton, Ohio)

Chairman Oelslager, ranking member Cera and House Finance Committee Members, thank you for allowing me to come speak with you today.

My name is Joe Poelking and I am a 3rd generation bowling proprietor. Our bowling centers are located in the Dayton area – one in Dayton (Poelking Lanes); one in Miami Township (Poelking Lanes South); and one in Kettering (Poelking Woodman Lanes). My three centers employ approximately 80 people.

Over the years we've seen the ups and downs in our family business. Back in the 60's and 70's our business thrived, we had multi-shift league bowlers bowling all day and night. It was a place for family, friends and co-workers to gather.

Since then we have seen a decline in league bowling and have struggled to find other ways to continue to keep our business moving forward. It's been especially challenging since the introduction of the 4 Ohio casinos and slot machines in Ohio's 7 horserace tracks. So, as times continue to change, we think Ohio's small businesses need to be a part of that change and be more relevant to our customers. The ability to be able to offer additional entertainment options has become a key factor in our business. This is evident by our continued strong relationship with the Ohio Lottery, especially since the addition of KENO Kiosks in our locations. In fact, more recently, we have seen an uptick with our customers playing KENO Kiosks. They are coming in a little earlier before bowling to grab a bite to eat

and play a couple of KENO games, with some staying afterward to play KENO and hang out with their friends.

Due to our strong partnership with the Ohio Lottery that has spanned decades, we think it only makes good business sense that you DON'T handcuff the Lottery by prohibiting them from offering sports betting through the KENO Kiosks that we already operate safely and securely in our bowling centers. We have shown that we can generate millions of dollars for education funding and want to continue to be a part of that strong partnership with low stakes wagering for a KENO Kiosk bet. We've also been told our KENO Kiosks can be upgraded with software to offer sports gaming that would create a much needed "boost" to our businesses. A "boost" that we could use in order to keep our patrons in our bowling centers a little longer. It's a win-win for the state and small Ohio businesses. Plus, if you're going to allow mobile sports betting, why wouldn't you help us combat the potential of even more people NOT coming in to our establishments? It just doesn't seem small business friendly to us!

So, we respectfully request you amend HB 194 to include our KENO Kiosk locations to help us keep our customers in our bowling centers and to also attract new customers. By allowing us to be a part of this exciting new opportunity, it's a win-win for Ohio's small family owned businesses and the Ohio Lottery. Again, thank you for this opportunity to speak with you today, I'd be happy to try and answer any questions you may have.