



SAVE A WARRIOR™

"One Week Changes Everything"

**HB 282 Sponsor Testimony
Adam Carr, Save A Warrior
Senate Government Oversight & Reform Committee
December 2, 2020**

On behalf of Veterans from around the great state of Ohio, I assert that House Bill 282 will have a powerful impact on our community at large. This bill allows posts from within the Veteran Service Organizations (VSO) to evolve technologically, embracing the future whilst still honoring a favorite pastime. The charitable contributions generated from the approval of this bill will have a direct impact on lives that are currently in jeopardy in the state of Ohio. Right now, during this address, we will lose a Veteran to suicide. Frankly, that's unacceptable – especially when it could have been prevented. This isn't about politics or partisanship; this is about doing the right thing. Something that we all signed up for when we swore an oath in some capacity to the people we serve. I run a Public Benefit Corporation and



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everything I do is about the people that we serve. Everything. We have been combatting a pandemic before this pandemic and if there was an industry where you don't want a growing waitlist, it's in the realm of suicide. One of the organizations helping us combat this pandemic is The American Legion of Ohio. To date, they've given us \$45,000.00 USD in the fight to save lives and this would not have been possible without the gaming proceeds at their posts. The VFW and AMVETS are other prominent VSOs that support our cause and have done so through funds raised in gaming.

When people show up at our door, it's not good - we're the last house on the block. Whether someone's been thrown in a dumpster and left for dead as a little child, attempted suicide, been raped, lost a baby, killed for their country, been blown up or simply can't find a reason to go on - we're here for them. I don't deal in the space of "it is what it is", our disruption in the mental health space comes from "imagine what it could be". My encouragement to you today is that you'll put any personal bias or ideology aside and see this for what it could be - an opportunity to raise a substantial amount of money for good. I'm not here to debate gambling and I won't, I'm here to let you know that no matter what, gambling will continue. We can either vote against this bill and constrain these VSOs, fossilizing them in the process or we can look to the future and use technology in a positive way. We want our posts to be financially healthy so that they can support



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organizations like ours across the state. That financial health is tied directly to the passing of HB 282 and in doing so you would be creating ripple effects in families, businesses and communities all over Ohio. In the spirit of innovation, of progress and ultimately of impact - let's champion this bill so that those who stood up to serve this country while no one else would - are able to get the help that they so desperately deserve because after all, they're worth it.



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