

**Testimony of Marty Teifke, Owner
The Timbers Bowling Center
Maumee, Ohio
Proponent Testimony – HB 344
House Finance Committee
Tuesday, June 17, 2025**

Chairman Stewart, Vice Chair Dovilla, Ranking Member Sweeney, and members of the House Finance Committee, my name is Marty Teifke and I am a second-generation family business owner of a 20 lane Bowling Center in Maumee, Ohio. I'm also a former Marine, past president and current board chairman of the Bowling Centers Association of Ohio and I currently serve on our national association's board of directors. Our center opened in 1939 and has been a part of my family since 1968. We currently employ 18 Ohioans. Thank you for allowing my testimony today as a proponent of HB 344, regulating retail gambling in Ohio.

Bowling centers have been cornerstones of Ohio communities for generations. We employ thousands across the state, support local charities, sponsor youth sports, and offer a safe, inclusive space for recreation. We are not asking for special treatment - we are asking for fairness and for the tools to survive in a rapidly evolving market.

I respectfully urge you to support HB 344 and allow Ohio's hospitality-focused small businesses to offer a basic gaming product that will help us remain competitive, sustainable, and community-oriented for years to come.

HB 344 is not simply about entertainment - it's about economic equity. The current regulatory framework has unintentionally created a two-tiered system: one in which fraternal clubs and illegal operators enjoy significant gaming revenue, while small businesses like bowling centers - who follow the rules - are left behind. We are happy to see the Veterans Halls have been successful and all we've ever asked is to be included.

This imbalance is especially harmful as we continue recovering from the financial impact of the pandemic. Bowling centers are longstanding contributors to Ohio's local economies and are still rebuilding from years of shutdowns and capacity restrictions. HB 344 would empower these businesses to generate sustainable revenue, invest in facility upgrades, retain staff, and attract new customers.

Without legislative support, we risk losing more of these locally owned businesses - not because of mismanagement or lack of customer interest, but because of a policy gap that unfairly restricts their ability to compete.

This bill is an opportunity to support Ohio-grown small businesses with a responsible and regulated path to offering limited gaming entertainment - ensuring they aren't forced to choose between losing patrons to illegal operations or closing their doors altogether. Thank you for your time and I'll try to answer any questions.