

May 28, 2025

Chairman Manning, Vice Chairman Romanchuk, Ranking Member DeMora and Members of the Ohio Senate Select Committee on Gaming,

I am one of three owners of The Warehouse Tavern in downtown Mansfield, Ohio. We just celebrated our sixth year in business last month and have weathered everything from start-up expenses, COVID-19 shutdowns, skyrocketing insurance premiums, and increased prices for supplies & inventory. While most people would simply chalk these issues up to the cost of doing business, we as small business owners have felt the sting of trying to operate under higher inflation periods without passing the expense on to our customers. In the past few years, we have noticed a large amount of our clientele shifting their preferred location to the local social clubs that have the ability to offer slot type or VLT machines. I have personally spoken with several regular customers that have outwardly said they would frequent our establishment more often if we had the ability to run such machines.

From my understanding, this is an item that is currently up for approval within the state of Ohio for bars and taverns. Obviously, this has been approved for social clubs that serve alcohol as well. My hope for this issue is consideration from the state for owners of bars and taverns to have the same opportunity to survive & prosper that have been given to social clubs.

Thank you for your time and consideration concerning this matter. I welcome the opportunity to discuss or debate both the positive and negative aspects of the above.

Sincerely,

Tom Zellner, CEO  
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