Ohio House Finance Committee
Proponent Testimony for HB 194
7 November 2019

Chairman Oelslager, Vice Chairman Scherer, Ranking Member Cera and members of the committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 194. I also want to thank Representatives Greenspan and Kelly for sponsoring this bill.

I am here today on behalf of The American Legion Department of Ohio as well as AMVETS, VFW, Eagles, Elks, Moose and the Ohio Council of Fraternal, Veterans, and Service Organizations, Inc. Together, as veteran and fraternal organizations we present this testimony as one unified voice.

My colleagues in the veteran community would normally be with me, but the induction ceremony for the Ohio Veterans Hall of Fame is this morning, so they are at that event.

As we understand it, HB 194 would allow veterans and fraternal organizations participate in sports gaming at our posts and lodges. If sports gaming is legalized in Ohio, veterans and fraternals want very much to be included as locations where this activity would be permitted.

It's no secret that as our membership grows older, it has become increasingly difficult to attract younger veterans to join and participate in the great work we do in our communities. We believe sports gaming would appeal to younger veterans and would help increase participation in our organizations.

As you heard two weeks ago in our testimony on HB 282, our organizations do great work in local communities all across Ohio. I won't go into all that since it would be redundant to do so.

I will simply say that HB 194 would help veterans and fraternals organizations grow their organizations with a younger generation of members who tend to be more interested in sports gaming. This would result in continued impact for the betterment of our communities.

Thank you again for the opportunity to testify in support of this legislation.

Veterans Affairs & Rehabilitation   National Security   Americanism   Children & Youth