



DEVIN LEMAHIEU

STATE SENATOR

DATE: February 11, 2015
RE: **Testimony on 2015 Senate Bill 8**
TO: The Senate Committee on Revenue, Financial Institutions, and Rural Issues
FROM: Senator Devin LeMahieu

Mr. Chairman and committee members, thank you for taking time today to discuss Senate Bill 8, the Raffle Reform Bill. While it may not seem like the most exciting issue, this bill will make a positive impact in each of the communities you represent.

During my campaign last fall, time and time again members of various non-profit organizations approached me with concerns about the current raffle process in our state. Mostly, they didn't understand why their ideas and attempts to raise money for their charities were deemed illegal. For that reason I'm proud to make the Raffle Reform Bill the first bill that I have authored as a State Senator.

Unfortunately, our current raffle rules and regulations are confusing and over-burdensome to non-profit organizations and their volunteers. The goal of SB 8 is to simplify, update, and improve the charitable raffle regulations in our state, while maintaining transparency and fairness, to make it easier for non-profit organizations to conduct raffles.

More specifically, some important changes under the bill include: a faster application process, allowing organizations to hold more raffles each year, the "early bird" purchase of Class B raffles, and allowing Class A tickets to be sold a year in advance. These small changes, along with others included in the bill, all add up to create an easier system for non-profit organizations to raise money. Money that, whether it be through scholarships or wildlife preservation, is required by law to be directly invested into serving our communities.

According to the Department of Administration, over 8,600 organizations hold a raffle license in our state. Organizations such as local VFW posts, fire departments, conservation groups, lions clubs, and other service organizations that all count on revenue from raffles to aide their cause. The changes proposed by SB 8 will ease the burden on these charitable organizations and allow them to raise more funds to better our communities.

As you can see, this bill has received bi-partisan support in both houses. The assembly version, AB 14 just passed out of committee on a unanimous 15-0 vote. Last session, Senate Bill 628 (which this bill revises) passed the legislature with strong bi-partisan support as well. Now we would like to turn it over to some of the non-profit organizations that will benefit from this legislation. I hope you will join us in supporting this improvement to our state's laws.

Raffle Law Simplification Bill of 2015

Bill Provisions:

- 1 – **Eliminates rulemaking.** This puts all the raffle laws in one place and prevents department from complicating things back up in the future without coming to the Legislature.
- 2 – Clarifies raffle definitions so that pulling multiple tickets from one bin is clearly legal and having multiple buckets for Class B raffles is also clearly legal.
- 3 – Allows **Early Bird purchase** of Class B raffle tickets.
- 4 – Eliminate requirement that department “**continuously study**” raffle laws.
- 5 – Will allow an organization to conduct **365 Class B raffles per year**, up from 200.
- 6 – Requires department to make a “completion determination” within 15 days and to issue or deny a license within 30 days after that. **If not denied in 30 days, the license is considered approved.**
- 7 – Increasing the amount from **\$500 to \$1000 for prizes** that need to be listed on a Class A ticket.
- 8 – Allows an organization that has made a good faith effort to award a prize the ability to **keep the prize for future** fund-raising purposes.
- 9 – **Eliminate posting requirements** other than if a prize is age restricted. Organization just must have license available for inspection if asked.
- 10 – Allow ticket **sales one year before drawing** instead of 270 days.
- 11 – **Eliminates raffle ticket price caps** on both Class A and Class B raffles.
- 12 – **Eliminates that the burden of proof** is on the organization at a license denial hearing.
- 13 – **Increases the prize amount from \$100 to \$600** for whose names must be listed as winners and kept by the organization.
- 14 – **Eliminates sending to the department a report** every year and instead just requires it to be available for inspection. Eliminates the “other expenses” category from the report. Department can only **request a copy of the report upon receipt of a complaint.**
- 15 – **Eliminates rule against co-mingling of funds.**



Wisconsin Firearm Owners, Ranges,
Clubs and Educators, Inc.

Phone 888-337-3534
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February 11, 2015

Relating to: Regulation of Raffles Act AB-14/SB-8

Committee on Revenue, Financial Institutions, and Rural Issues

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee,

Wisconsin FORCE (Firearm Owners, Ranges, Clubs, and Educators Inc.) enthusiastically supports AB-14/SB-8. It is time to reduce the burdens placed on volunteers that are working to support non-profit organizations across the state.

Under current law, not-for-profit, religious, charitable, service, fraternal, and veteran organizations that serve Wisconsin may obtain a license to conduct raffles. However, the current law is outdated monetarily and in areas of technology, and puts undue pressure on people who just want to do their part. This bill would help decrease the burden on Wisconsinites that are stepping up in support of their community and state.

All of the organizations that are affected by this regulation are an important part of the fabric of our state. It is critical that Wisconsin allows these volunteers to donate their precious time to support these groups in the most efficient and beneficial manner.

Wisconsin Firearm Owners, Ranges, Clubs, and Educators Inc. encourages you to pass this bill.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Jeffrey L. Nass
Executive Director
Wisconsin Firearm Owners,
Ranges, Clubs and Educators, Inc.

Public Hearing for Senate Bill 8: relating to the regulation of raffles

I appreciate the opportunity to address this committee today.

My name is Phil Mersberger and I live at 9759 Middle Road, Oostburg, which is in Sheboygan County. I am the president of the Sheboygan County Conservation Association (S.C.C.A.), which is a 501(c)(3) not-for-profit corporation consisting of 28 conservation, fishing, trapping, hunting, archery, and trap shooting clubs, with over 2000 members. Each of these clubs conduct raffles as a portion of their fundraising.

The Sheboygan County Conservation Association itself holds two fundraisers every year and raffles are an integral part of each of them. In fact, raffles are our life-blood when it comes to raising money to support the many projects that S.C.C.A. is involved in every year. So, anything that will make raffle law application and compliance more user-friendly, would be a good thing . We would not be able to do most of the projects listed on page 3, if it were not for raffles.

Conservation associations are one Wisconsin group that benefits from the use of raffles, but there are many others also. Fraternal organizations, like Rotary clubs, Lions, Kiwanians and the Elks benefit from having raffles. Fire departments, especially volunteer fire departments, and police associations, churches, schools, and veterans groups benefit as well. Hundreds and hundreds of benevolent charitable organizations also hold raffle fundraisers every year. All combined, the above groups number in the thousands in Wisconsin.

Our association was audited in 2013 and many of the issues brought to our attention would not have been a concern had Senate Bill 8 been in place at that time. An update of the WI Raffle Rules is long overdue.

I and the Sheboygan County Conservation Association, along with its more than 2000 members, are in support of ^{Senate Bill 8} ~~Assembly Bill 14~~ because it will streamline the application process, it will clarify raffle definitions, it will allow for Early Bird purchase of Class B raffle tickets, it will update

many of the clerical responsibilities of the raffle sponsor, it will eliminate having to produce the annual report as part of the licensing process, and it will reduce the amount of DOA responsibility in their administration of the Raffle Laws. Simply put, it will make it easier to legally run a raffle in Wisconsin.

This concludes my comments.



Phil Mersberger

President, Sheboygan County Conservation Association

Recent SCCA Projects

- Youth archery equipment for Maywood, Y-Koda, Winooski Bowmen, & W. Bowhtr
- 200 youth size life jackets for Maywood, Y-Koda, & Longfellow Reel 'Em In Club
- \$8,500.00 for wheelchair accessible floating fishing pier at Camp Anakijig
- \$25,000.00 pledge to help renovate the fishing pond at Camp Y-Koda
- With the support of the Sheboygan Co. Stewardship Fund and the State of Wisconsin Stewardship Fund, purchased 40 acres of recreation land contiguous to south side of Sheboygan Marsh and donated to Sheboygan County.
- Annual Scholarships: \$1000.00 Roy Kalmerton & \$1000.00 Marion & Bob Schuchardt
- Annual Pheasant Rearing Program: 1721 birds released in 2014
- Annual Pheasant Food/Cover Crop Program: 72 acres in 2014
- Wisconsin Outdoor Alliance; \$500.00 3000 elementary students in 2013
- Donation to Sheboygan Falls High School Fishing Club
- Donation to Muskies B-T-L youth education/fishing program: Turning Leaf
- Annual Outdoor Activity Day: Clubs and SCCA spent \$2500.00 for fish, worms, etc
- Annual Camp Y-Koda: Sponsor a Classroom Program
- Annual donation to Maywood and Camp Y-Koda to support youth programs
- Annual Trees for Tommorrow trip: free to Sheboygan Co. high school students
- Participate in Adopt A Highway Project: clean up 3 times a year.
- Purchased 225 copies of Field Guide to Invasive Plants in WI: Invasive species program
- Financial support to two 4-H youth to attend the national 4-H air rifle/archery competition
- Annual pass-the-hat at December SCCA meeting: 2014, collected carload of non-perishable food plus \$641.00 for Sheboygan County Food Pantry; \$793.00 for the Sheboygan Co. Share the Spirit Program; and \$1,144.00 for the Wounded Warrior Program.
- \$500.00 toward the Riverside Hunting & Fishing Club-St. Cloud's wood duck house building and restoration project
- Lots of other projects