



CHRIS KAPENGA

WISCONSIN STATE SENATOR

Charity Raffle Testimony

Senate Committee on Government Operations, Technology, and Consumer
Protection

Tuesday January 14th, 2020

Thank you Chairman Stroebel and committee members for hearing testimony on Senate Bill 614 today. In 1998, Bryon Riesch suffered a tragic injury that resulted in him becoming a quadriplegic. While his body is mostly paralyzed, Bryon refused to let this tragedy define him and has since become an inspiration to those who have the opportunity to meet him.

In 2001, Bryon founded the Bryon Riesch Paralysis Foundation (BRPF) as a nonprofit to help find a cure for paralysis by funding medical research and providing assistance to those that suffer from neurological disorders. For over fifteen years, the foundation has been granted a raffle license from the state of Wisconsin to help with fundraising efforts. This past year the Division of Gaming denied their license saying that previous licenses were granted in error.

According to the Office of Charitable Gaming's interpretation of current law, "All activities of the organization must be limited to Wisconsin to satisfy the 'local' requirement." This means if a single dollar of the organization's proceeds go out of state, the organization is ineligible to even hold a raffle.

In the case of the Bryon Riesch Foundation, most of their dollars stay in state, but they do fund valuable research in other states. Their belief is that to make a real impact in the search for a cure, the money they raise at times will need to reach beyond state lines.

This legislation will set out clear requirements for determining local organizations and their ability to hold a raffle. The three new requirements are that the organization is headquartered in the state, the majority of funds the organization raises stay in state, and all raffle proceeds stay in state.

The Bryon Riesch Paralysis Foundation is a great example of a local organization making a difference in our community. Our bill would allow organizations like BRPF to continue their work while having the ability to raise funds through a raffle.

Thank you committee members for your time and consideration of this bill. I would be happy to answer any questions you have.



SCOTT ALLEN

REPRESENTATIVE • 97TH ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

Testimony on Senate Bill 614

Licensure of Local Organizations to Conduct Raffles

January 14, 2020

Chairman Stroebel and Committee Members:

Thank you for holding this hearing on Senate Bill 614, relating to the licensure of local organizations to conduct raffles.

The impetus for this bill occurred when a local organization, the Bryon Reisch Paralysis Foundation (BRPF), was impeded in their cause by Wisconsin statute.

For over a decade, the Foundation was granted raffle licenses by the state of Wisconsin to help with fundraising efforts. This year, that application was denied. The Wisconsin Gaming Commission has interpreted the current statute very strictly, so that if even a single dollar goes out of state, the organization is no longer permitted to even hold a raffle let alone utilize the funds raised to further their mission.

This Wisconsin based organization was unable to conduct its raffle fundraising efforts due to a small monetary amount being spent across our borders in Illinois. It is their belief, and presumptively the belief of many other organizations, that to make a real impact, some funding will at times, need to cross state lines.

With minor changes to criteria, this bill expands the reach of local organizations and their fundraising efforts such that monetary donations may be contributed and allocated per the wishes of that organization. This bill could have a considerable impact on research and a broadening reach with this and other causes for years to come.

Thank you for your careful consideration of this bill.

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*The 97th Assembly District includes portions of the City of Waukesha
and the Towns of Waukesha, Genesee, and Mukwonago.*