



April 1st, 2021

Delegate Roger Hanshaw
Speaker, West Virginia House of Delegates

RE: SB 263, legislation to legalize online raffles of charities in West Virginia.

Dear Speaker Hanshaw,

We, the undersigned organizations, representing the interests of tens of thousands of sportsmen and women, veterans, firefighters, church groups and service organization members throughout West Virginia, are writing to express our strong support for SB 263, a bill to legalize online raffles for nonprofits. This bill would provide much needed relief to nonprofits in all sectors who work every day to make our communities stronger. Our organizations traditionally raise money through in-person events, but due to the pandemic we have collectively cancelled hundreds of events, stymieing our ability to fundraise. Online raffles would be the safest and most effective way to provide relief to nonprofits without burdening the taxpayers. We therefore urge you to support this legislation in the House of Delegates by favorably passing it from the chamber.

The pandemic has had a serious financial impact on our organizations by taking away a primary means of fundraising. This creates a cascading effect on the state and limits our ability to provide financial and other support for a wide variety of missions. Nonprofits in West Virginia provide a plethora of services to the state and its people. Among other work, more than 10,000 nonprofits support veterans and their families, ensure firehouses have the resources they need to protect their community and support conservation work to promote outdoor recreation and cherished traditions like hunting and fishing. Additionally, this legislative change would bolster the economy, as nonprofits employ 12.7 percent of the state's workforce, making it the third largest employment sector in the state, behind only retail and manufacturing.

This proposed legislation would only amend the Charitable Raffle law in the West Virginia Code¹, ensuring that all current state and federal laws will continue to be adhered to when conducting these raffles online. The legislation would provide much needed relief to local firehouses, veterans, service organizations, church groups and conservation groups, to name a few, all of whom have been hit equally hard by the pandemic. Our communities need these organizations now more than ever, and this

¹ W. Va. Code Ann. § 47-21-2(n)

legislation will ensure we can maintain collaborative efforts to make lasting impacts for West Virginians for years to come.

In a resounding vote of confidence for this legislation, SB 263 passed the Senate Judiciary committee unanimously, passed the Senate 34-1 and attained a clear majority in the House Judiciary Committee. This overwhelming and bipartisan support underscores the importance of this issue and demonstrates that all corners of West Virginia not only want this change to be made but *need* this change to be made.

We ask you to support this fiscally responsible legislation on the House floor to help provide much-needed relief to the nonprofits and community organizations of West Virginia. Thank you for your consideration and efforts to help nonprofits during this trying time.

Sincerely,
Ducks Unlimited
Congressional Sportsmen's Foundation
Veterans of Foreign Wars, Department of West Virginia
West Virginia State Fireman's Association
Ruffed Grouse Society/American Woodcock Society
Trout Unlimited, Ernie Nester Chapter
National Wild Turkey Federation

CC: Delegate Gary G. Howell, Speaker Pro Tempore
Delegate Amy Summers, Majority Leader
Delegate Kayla Kessinger, Assistant Majority Leader
Delegate Paul Espinosa, Majority Whip
Delegate Doug Skaff, Minority Leader
Delegate Shawn Fluharty, Minority Whip