

Interim Taxation Committee Meeting – 9/24/19**Melissa Harvey Testimony**

Greetings Mr. Chairman and committee members,

My name is Melissa Harvey and I am the gaming manager for the Arc Upper Valley and the Horace Lions Club. I'd like to talk to you today about the great works we have accomplished with the use of charitable gaming funds and how the taxation of electronic pull tabs needs to be adjusted.

In the past year, the Horace Lions Club has donated significant funding for Leader Dogs for the Blind, Bike Helmets for Kids, Boy Scouts, Cub Scouts, Girl Scouts, Elementary Schools, lighting for the local baseball park, donations which allowed the Horace Senior Center to remain open, and \$5000 to the Horace Fire Department to update their equipment.

Charitable gaming funds for the Arc of the Upper Valley are used for advocacy programs, as well as resource and referral options. Arc of the Upper Valley also runs a support group for parents or guardians of disabled children and a play group for children with autism to play in a sensory positive environment with their peers. We also provide gifts and visits to needy and disabled persons who are without family during the Christmas season. In the past year, we were also selected by Allegiant Airlines to sponsor a Wings for All event, which is a mock airport experience for disabled persons. With this program, the experience includes going through TSA, boarding the plane, safety information, and gives parents and guardians the peace of mind that travel will be a fun and rewarding experience. We sponsor a mental first aid program which helps to provide information on how to help a person in a mental health crisis. This program helps save lives.

Thanks to electronic pull tabs, both organizations have been able to increase charitable donations and programing by 50%. Taxes on gaming, however, have increased 300% for the Arc and 400% for the Horace Lions Club. We would like to see more of the taxes that are going to the general fund remain with the nonprofit organizations, so those funds may be used for local needs and to fill in the gaps not receiving funding from the state.

Originally gaming taxes were intended to fund the regulation of charitable gaming. With the advent of electronic pull tabs, there are more than enough tax funds raised to cover the cost of regulation, plus funds for gambling addiction treatment. The excess funds beyond that should be returned to the charitable organizations who are the true subject matter experts and know the best way to serve their communities.