



March 3, 2021

RE: Support, amendment to HF 897 allowing debit cards to be used for purchasing charitable raffle tickets over the telephone.

Chairman Nelson and members of the committee,

On behalf of our respective memberships, totaling over 100,000 dedicated conservation supporters, we wish to express support for the amendment to HF 897 to allow debit cards to be used for purchasing charitable raffle tickets over the telephone. Legalizing the ability to conduct raffle ticket sales over the phone by charitable non-profits will help organizations like ours during the COVID-19 crisis. Our organizations have conserved hundreds of thousands of acres across Minnesota thanks in large part to our dedicated members and supporters who have traditionally given generously to our organization at in-person events.

The pandemic has presented unforeseen challenges to our organizations who have relied so heavily on in-person gatherings to generate private conservation dollars. Furloughs, drastic budget cuts and even layoffs are part of the new reality for most non-profit organizations around the state and we are no exception. These challenging times call for creative responses to help our community adapt and respond, and in this spirit of innovation and resiliency, we are hopeful that you will support inclusion of this amendment to legalize the conduct of charitable raffle ticket sales by phone by qualified nonprofits.

Existing statute does not explicitly permit over-the-phone raffle ticket sales, nor does it explicitly prohibit them. The current regulatory agency with jurisdiction over charitable raffles (Minnesota Gambling Control Board) has taken the position that phone raffles are not permitted unless explicitly allowed under state law. It is therefore critically important to make this statutory clarification so that qualified nonprofits can remain healthy long into the future.

With in-person gatherings still a thing of the past, modernization of nonprofit fundraising abilities is needed more now than ever. With many public health safety measures in place limiting in-person gathering sizes we need the freedom to and permission to adapt. Phone raffle legalization would revive one of the Minnesota nonprofit community's most valuable fundraising tools by allowing supporters to participate in charitable raffles safely and remotely.

Sincerely,

Scott Christensen, Ducks Unlimited

Tom Glines, National Wild Turkey Federation

Dave Carlson, Minnesota Outdoor Heritage Alliance

Craig Engwall, Minnesota Deer Hunters Association

Eran Sandquist, Pheasants Forever