

HCR 26-1001 – Modernizing Charitable Gaming in Colorado

Fact Sheet

Sponsors: Rep. Ricks & Rep. Suckla and Sen. Hinrichsen

1. Introduction: Why Change Is Necessary

Charitable gaming in Colorado is governed by constitutional provisions adopted in **1958—68 years ago**. These outdated restrictions limit how nonprofit organizations conduct bingo and raffles, preventing them from adapting to modern player expectations and a rapidly evolving gaming marketplace.

Today, charitable organizations must compete with:

- Casinos
- State lottery
- Sports betting
- Horse racing and off-track betting

Unlike these industries, charitable gaming remains locked into rigid constitutional language that cannot easily be updated. As a result, participation is declining, and nonprofits are losing a critical funding tool that supports community services across Colorado.

2. What HCR 26-1001 Does

HCR 26-1001 **does not change charitable gaming law directly.**

Instead, it:

- Places a question on the **November 2026 ballot**
- Allows **Colorado voters to decide** whether to modernize charitable gaming
- **Removes outdated constitutional restrictions** (5-year waiting period for nonprofits, restrictions on staffing, inflexible oversight structure, limited use of technology)
- Authorizes the **General Assembly to establish oversight in statute**. This would speed up the ability to respond to changing player demands, as well as attract more players to bingo and raffles.

Key Point:

A “yes” vote by the legislature simply **refers the question to the voters**—it does not implement changes.

Charitable gaming will continue to be:

- Limited to **nonprofit, charitable, fraternal, and veterans organizations**
- Used exclusively for **charitable purposes**

These changes would put charitable gaming on par with the casino’s, lottery, horse racing, off-track and sports betting.

3. What HCR 26-1001 Does NOT Do

HCR 26-1001 does **NOT**:

- Expand gaming beyond charitable purposes
- Allow for-profit entities to operate bingo or raffles
- Eliminate oversight or accountability
- Immediately change how charitable gaming operates
- **Take bingo/raffles out of the Constitution.**

Instead, it preserves legislative oversight and ensures that **any changes only occur after voter approval.**

4. Why It Is Necessary (Data-Driven Reality)

Data from *Colorado Charitable Gaming: Trends and Insights (2011–2024)* shows a system under pressure:

- **Licenses declined by 39%** (1,286 → 789)
- **Bingo occasions dropped by 38%**
- **Player participation fell by 53%**

At the same time:

- Gross wagering slightly increased (+6%)
- Net profits increased (+57%) due to fewer but more efficient operations
- Licenses are down 39% and players are down 53%, showing a declining system.

- At the same time, Colorado faces a \$1.5 billion budget deficit. A more prosperous charitable gaming system would generate increased tax revenue, helping support the state budget while strengthening nonprofit programs

What this means:

- **Fewer organizations are participating**
- Fewer players are engaged
- The system is **shrinking in reach**, even if remaining operations are more efficient

Without modernization:

- **Small and emerging nonprofits are locked out**
- Participation will continue to decline
- Community-based programs will lose funding

Current constitutional barriers include:

- 5-year waiting period for nonprofits
- Restrictions on staffing
- Inflexible oversight structure
- Limited use of technology

These limitations prevent the system from adapting to modern realities.

5. What You Can Do

Support the passage of HRC26-1001 and let your constituents decide in the November election.

Core Message:

☞ This is not about expanding gaming—it's about letting the people decide the future of charitable fundraising in Colorado.

Bottom Line

Colorado's charitable gaming system is outdated and declining.

HCR 26-1001 does not change the law, simply **trusts voters to decide** whether modernization should occur.

This is a vote for voter choice, nonprofit sustainability, and the future of charitable funding in Colorado.

For More Information:

Corky Kyle, MPA, CAE
Executive Vice President
Colorado Charitable Gaming Association
☎ 303-363-5422
✉ Ckyle@TheKyleGroup.com