

Susan C. Stokes
719 Baylor Road
Glen Burnie, Maryland 21061

January 29, 2020

The Honorable Delegate Anne R. Kaiser
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: House Bill 0131

Dear Delegate Kaiser:

My name is Susan Stokes and I reside at 719 Baylor Road, Glen Burnie, Maryland. I am a member of Severna Park Elks' Lodge #2482 and currently serve as the Chaplain.

I am writing to ask that you and the Committee help our lodge and all other fraternal organizations in the following counties: Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Howard, Harford, Frederick, Carroll, Allegany, Calvert, Montgomery, Prince Georges, Garrett, St. Mary's, Charles and Baltimore City to be better financially equipped to reach out to our communities in a broader sense by passing House Bill 0131 with amendments. The monies received through the Instant Lottery Machines would allow the lodges to increase their benevolent spending. In the Severna Park Lodge this year we have donated 150 food baskets to identified needy families in our area, provided personal \$1000 scholarships to 2 students from the greater Anne Arundel county area, paid for 27 children, identified as in need, to attend the Elks' Camp Barrett summer camp, donated money to Falcons Booster Club, Old Mill Youth Association, Eagle Scout Troop #454, given substantial donations to the National Multiple Scleroses Society, Neuroendocrine Research, Helping Out Mission, Help Hope Live, Partners In Care, Wreaths Across America donated 81 fully supplied backpacks to Marley Elementary School, donated \$2500 worth of school supplies directly to teachers to resupply classrooms in the middle of the school year, purchased specific supplies for Ruth Eason School (tactile equipment, wipes, books and non-latex gloves), provided care packages for the residents of the Veterans Nursing Home at Loch Raven and donated 4 bins of toys and \$500 to Toys for Tots as well as providing Christmas gifts for 50 children on our Angel Tree.

The above is just as example of the benevolent giving from one Elk's Lodge since April 2019. In total there are 23 Elks Lodges that would be positively impacted by the passage of House Bill 0131. This number does not include the many other fraternal organizations included in the bill's language.

Recently the Deale Elks' Lodge submitted a Bond Initiative to the Anne Arundel County Delegation for monies to help improve their lodge building. They have requested a grant, not hard or soft funding. With money from this bill, that lodge could use money from its operating budget for that expense and money from the lottery machines could be used for benevolent purposes. It would also free up bond money to benefit others in need of funds.

I would also like to address a concern brought by Senator Miller when testimony was given before the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee earlier this month. Senator Miller expressed the concern that we wanted passage of SB 59 to increase our memberships. My question in response to this idea is: Why would anyone who could just walk into any casino in Maryland at no cost, sit down and play slots at their leisure pay an initiation fee and yearly dues to play the Instant Lottery Machine at their lodge and maybe even have to wait because the number of machines could be only up to five? Does not make any sense! In addition, I frequent three separate American Legions in the area (Posts 175, 276 and 40) all have the Instant Lottery Machines and none have gained membership due to the installation of those machines.

I personally see the passage of House Bill 0131 with amendments as a triple win. Certainly for our Maryland veterans in the form of funds to be used by the Division of Neighborhood Revitalization, for the fraternal organizations effected and for the greater Maryland community receiving funding and other help from the organizations by its passing.

Thank you for your time and consideration to help House Bill 0131 be approved by this Committee.

Sincerely,

Susan C. Stokes