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HB 2219 Proponent Testimony to the House Taxation Committee on Wagering Losses  
February 9, 2024

Chairman Adam Smith and members of the House Taxation Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to present testimony in support of HB 2219. As a proponent, this bill seeks to realign the handling of wagering losses in our state with the federal standards, which is long overdue for many taxpayers who have been burdened with the tax implications that were initiated when farmers and business became exempt from taxes in 2012.

Back in 2012, our state made a decision to discontinue the practice of allowing deductions for wagering losses as a measure to compensate for the tax exemptions granted to our farmers and business community. This decision was intended to address revenue shortfalls, and inadvertently placed an explainable burden on those who enjoyed visiting and supporting our state's casinos.

Our local Kansas casinos, which play a pivotal role in bolstering Kansas's economy and providing employment opportunities, are at a disadvantage due to the state's current stance on wagering losses, which diverges from the federal approach. This divergence not only places a financial strain on casino goers (who are needed to support casinos) but also casts doubt on the value and contribution of the casino industry to our economy. In addition, another subject at stake - the fairness of the Kansas tax code taking into account the reinstatement of taxes on businesses and farmers without a corresponding reinstatement of the wagering loss deductions taken away in 2012.

The discrepancy in tax treatment between our state and the federal government detracts from the support that our casinos and their patrons rightly deserve. By allowing the deduction of wagering losses once more, we can reinforce the casino industry's positive impact on our economy.

As an advocate for the restoration of these deductions as a step towards ensuring equitable treatment and enhancing the economic vitality of our casino communities, please support HB 2219 to amend this incongruity, thereby affirming your commitment to both the individuals who frequent visit our casinos and the broader casino industry itself.

Your thoughtful consideration of this matter is greatly appreciated and please honor a request that HB 2219 be retroactive to January 1, 2024.

Sincerely,



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