



BOYS & GIRLS CLUBS
of Topeka

February 14, 2013

Senator Ostmeyer and members of the Federal & State Affairs Committee;

Thank you for the opportunity to speak before you today regarding SB 148. I am Dawn McWilliams Executive Director of the Boys & Girls Clubs of Topeka.

I come before you today in support of SB 148 and I would like to acknowledge and extend sincere appreciation to Senator LaTurner for authoring this bill and bringing it to committee

Non Profits are a vital source of our community. In 1956 the BGCT was established by community visionaries to meet the needs of youth in our community who needed us most. These visionaries were local executives, community leaders and concerned citizens all of whom not only shared in a vision but invested time, talent & resources to establish a strong stable organization in your community that has changed the course of thousands of children's lives throughout our community. Like many organizations we exist to meet a need and to address gaps that exist in the communities in which we live. We make our community better, stronger and healthier.

Success leads to growth. BGCT saw this in 1977 when we outgrow our current rented space. Again community leaders converged to establish a campaign to raise funds necessary to construct a 1.8 million dollar facility that is now home and safe haven to hundreds of children today.

We pride ourselves on grassroots advocacy, sharing compelling outcomes, successes and achievements – these three ingredients paired with human compassion, kindness, concern and the desire to make a difference equals contribution/giving of resources , which is critical for sustainability and continued success. – This is the heartbeat of our organization and many organizations alike.

Nonprofits work tirelessly to meet the need and more times than none, do this with limited funds and tight budgets. Strategies to diversify funding to sustain programs are an ongoing essential function. Needs continue to rise and revenue challenges plaque us – now more than ever.

Fundraising is and always has been a vital component to nonprofits. – From quilt raffles, to poker runs to the excitement of winning a car as the result of a plastic duck reaching a finish line first. However, under current statute these activities, which are motivated only for the greater good of the organization, are

defined as unlawful. We are 1 only 4 states that does not have an exclusory exemption for nonprofits to responsibly utilize raffles in a manner to supplement our fundraising efforts.

Speaking on behalf of our members, their families, our dedicated staff, and our committed board of directors are committed to operating within ALL applicable local, state, and federal laws. Fundraising has been our foundation for our existing services and fundraising is critical for those services needed tomorrow. Fundraising is all encompassing from special events, annual campaign appeals and special projects. This bill supports the integrity of the grassroots effort that so many nonprofits were born from. It provides a clearer understanding and interpretation of responsible fundraising, through the identification of “qualified organizations” and a clear definition of “raffle”

We have worked very closely with the Kansans Racing & Gaming Commission to bring our special events that we are so very dependent on to “fit” within current applicable law. This action has brought about a lot of awareness, education and understanding as to the lines that may be crossed with many fundraising activities

Revising this statute ensures the many businesses, individuals and groups that invest their resources in us that we respect, understand and operate with only the greatest integrity. It provides clarity, consistency and a viable means for many of us to survive in the ever challenging fiscal climate

Thank you again for the opportunity to speak with you today. I thank you for all that you do for all citizens of our state and I stand for any questions you might have.

Dawn McWilliams

Executive Director, Boys & Girls Clubs of Topeka