

# PANCO

## *Pennsylvania Association of Nationally Chartered Organizations*

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### **Testimony**

#### **PA House Gaming Oversight Committee**

**June 10, 2019**

**Thomas W. Helsel, Jr., Secretary**

Good morning Chairman Marshall and Chairman Conklin. My name is Tom Helsel and I am the secretary for the PA Association of Nationally Chartered Organizations or more commonly known as PANCO. PANCO is comprised of individual aeries, lodges and posts from the Fraternal Order of Eagles, Benevolent and Protective Order of Elks, Loyal Order of Moose, American Legion and Veterans of Foreign Wars.

I would like to thank the Committee for the invitation to provide testimony on skill game machines. PANCO is aware of the current dilemma surrounding the use of these machines.

PANCO has advised its membership that the PA Department of Revenue and PA State Police have opined that the skill game machines are illegal in the Commonwealth. We are also aware of the Beaver County court decision that ruled a particular skill game machine, the Pace-O-Matic Pennsylvania Skill Game, as a game of skill rather than chance and thereby a legal game.

Many of our members have turned to the Pennsylvania Skill Game as an additional source of revenue based upon the reliance by vendors and the manufacturer that the game is one of skill rather than chance. Over the past several years they have experienced an increase in revenue as a result of skill games.

The dilemma I mentioned is whether the Pennsylvania Skill Game is legal or illegal. There are varying opinions on that. We have members who have heeded the opinions of Revenue and the PA State Police and have not engaged in the operation of skill games. We have many members who have done the opposite, relying on the claims voiced by the vendors and manufacturer.

The bottom line is everyone wants to know what is legal. Whether it is a court ruling that is valid statewide or legislation, our members would like the answer.

Our members would like to see the skill game remain as another source of revenue. We acknowledge that the game should only be operated in adult venues such as clubs and taverns. We also recognize the need to regulate the game. But at the end of the day, we would like to have skill games as part of our revenue sources.

Again, I would like to thank the Committee for this opportunity and look forward to any questions you may have.