

To: Finance, Revenue and Bonding Committee
From: Justin Harned, Owner, The Federal Café, Hartford, Ct
Re: Please support HB 7054, An Act Concerning Keno
Date: April 10, 2015

My name is Justin Harned and I own and run The Federal Café in Hartford Connecticut. The reason I am writing to you today is to make it clear that allowing Keno in Connecticut would be a much needed boost to my business as well as many other similar businesses across the state.

The Federal Café is at 84 Union Place in downtown Hartford right across Union train station. I have owned the business for five years but it has been open for eighty one years in total. After speaking with the former owner and looking at numbers, my five years have been some of the hardest and tightest in the bars history. With the national and local economies both drudging through the recession, numbers just have not been what they once were. I pride myself as a hard worker that makes ends meet through long hours and frugality. With that being said I make just enough income from the bar to get by financially. With tougher DUI laws and the no smoking in public law that passed maybe a decade ago, bars in Connecticut, and my bar in specific, have been on a slow decline for years.

Keno represents a chance to change this pattern for my business as well as others across the state. It would be the first new source of income for bars and restaurants in a long time. As border town businesses well know, Keno is a proven success in many neighboring states. There is no reason why it would not work in Connecticut. Not only will it bring money from my customers that are already in place, but hopefully provide people with a new reason to come check out Hartford's oldest bar. This is an amenity that with the states helps I could offer to customers at little to no cost or risk to me or my business. It can only help my bottom line.

To sum it up I believe Keno is a win, win, win. It has been estimated the state will make 20 million dollars annually from Keno. As a small business in Connecticut I win by drawing new customers as well as selling a new form of entertainment to my current customers. The customers are also winners as now they don't have to go to the casinos in the south eastern part of the state or across state borders to play Keno. With places both in and around our state that already allow keno and other forms of legalized gambling there should be no moral questions about this. I truly hope the state of Connecticut's legislator will be realists about that. Allow the profits from Keno to help the small businesses in the state as well as the state itself.

Thank you

Justin Harned (Booch8@hotmail.com)