



**To:** House Committee on Regulatory Reform

**Date:** November 9, 2021

**RE:** Support for HB 5393, concerning legalizing internet raffles conducted by approved nonprofits

Members of the Committee,

The COVID-19 pandemic has dealt a devastating blow to Michigan's nonprofit community who rely heavily on in-person gatherings for the lion's share of their annual fundraising efforts. Furloughs, drastic budget cuts and even layoffs are part of the new reality for most non-profit organizations around the state. These challenging times call for creative responses to help our community adapt and respond, and in this spirit of innovation and resiliency, we are hopeful that the Michigan legislature will quickly pull together to pass HB 5393 to legalize the conduct of charitable online raffles by qualified nonprofits.

This straight-forward legislation will create a new fundraising tool for nonprofits to utilize to stay healthy and resilient in the face of an uncertain future. The bill specifically:

- Defines and permits the conduct of "Internet Raffles" by bona fide nonprofit organizations.
- Prohibits all cash prizes.
- Keeps all raffle permit application and reporting requirements the same as in-person raffles.
- Establishes a \$50 permit application fee for internet raffle permits, mirroring the existing fee structure in statute for in-person raffles.
- Gives regulatory authority over all charitable raffles, online or otherwise, to the Michigan Gaming Control Board.
- Requires the Gaming Control Board to promulgate rules to carry-out the act not later than 90 days after the effective date.

Ducks Unlimited's (DU) nearly 30,000 members and volunteers across the state, who organize and historically attend wetland conservation focused fundraisers are eager to find new ways to raise funds and contribute to our wetland conservation mission. As result of our members' philanthropic spirit and generosity, DU's conservation track record includes over 80,000 acres conserved across Michigan, benefitting the state's citizens by supporting fish and wildlife, attenuating flood waters, recharging our precious groundwater resources, and capturing Harmful



Algal Bloom causing nutrients. That said, our conservation mission will be compromised if laws and regulations governing charity fundraising are not modernized to account for the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Michigan's elected officials have consistently rose to the occasion to enact conservation-friendly public policy. We need you now more than ever to help put another win on the board for the conservation and charitable nonprofit community at-large to position Michigan charitable fundraising to be resilient to whatever the future brings.

We ask that you please support HB 5393 and do all you can to advance this legislation as quickly as possible. Thank you all for your leadership and service to the citizens of Michigan.

Sincerely,

Tracy Oberleiter  
State Chair  
Ducks Unlimited

Dave Bowers  
State Policy Chair  
Ducks Unlimited