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# SHAE SORTWELL

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STATE REPRESENTATIVE • 2<sup>nd</sup> ASSEMBLY DISTRICT

**Hearing Testimony**  
**Senate Committee on Insurance, Licensing, and Forestry**  
**September 29, 2021**  
**Senate Bill 401**

Thank you Chair-woman Felzkowski and members of the Senate Committee on Insurance, Licensing, and Forestry for taking the time to hear testimony on Senate Bill 401 – relating to exempting 50/50 raffles from license requirements.

In order to conduct a 50/50 raffle in Wisconsin, an eligible organization needs to obtain an annual Class B license (\$25) from the Department of Administration.

For frequent high-scale, community-based raffles, requiring a raffle license is fair and understandable. However, organizations, such as the American Legion, hold a few small-scale 50/50 raffles throughout the year at monthly membership meetings, often for fundraising purposes. Most of the time, the winner donates the money back to the organization.

The government should not penalize veteran organizations and others, such as sports clubs and charities, for modest and narrow fundraising within their own body. That should not be the intent of the raffle law.

SB 401 will create an exemption to purchase these 50/50 raffle licenses for eligible organizations when conducting such an event if the cash prize is \$500 or less, if the ticket sales are limited to the organization's own membership, and if the organization complies with all other requirements for the conduct of raffles.

The American Legion, the Disabled American Veterans, the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW), and the WI Bear Hunters Association support this bill. It recently passed the Assembly Committee on State Affairs with bipartisan support (11-2).

I appreciate the committee's time and will answer any questions you may have.



FULFILLING OUR PROMISES  
TO THE MEN AND WOMEN WHO SERVED

## Department of Wisconsin

**STATEMENT OF  
AL LABELLE  
DAV WISCONSIN BENEFITS PROTECTION TEAM LEADER  
BEFORE THE  
COMMITTEE ON INSURANCE, LICENSING, AND FORESTRY  
WISCONSIN STATE SENATE  
SEPTEMBER 29, 2021**

Chairwoman Felzkowski and distinguished Members of the Committee:

Good Afternoon! Thank you for allowing DAV (Disabled American Veterans) this opportunity to present our view on Senate Bill 401 (SB 401) Relating to: *exempting 50/50 raffles from license requirements.*

As you may know, DAV is a non-profit veterans service organization (VSO) comprised of over one million wartime service-disabled veterans, nationwide. In Wisconsin, we have nearly 15,000 members.

Each year, DAV helps more than one million veterans with Benefits, Transportation, Advocacy, Employment, and Volunteerism. Well over eighty percent (80%) of our total expenditures go to Service.

All our members are wartime wounded, injured or ill veterans, many of them severely. They have sacrificed much in defense of our freedoms.

Under current law, charitable, religious, or veterans' nonprofits may conduct a 50/50 raffle after receiving a raffle license from the Department of Administration (DOA).

SB 401 allows these nonprofits to conduct a 50/50 raffle without a license. The bill defines a 50/50 raffle as a raffle in which the awarded cash prize is equal to one-half of the ticket sales proceeds.

Under SB 401, an eligible nonprofit does not need to obtain a raffle license from DOA if the following criteria are met:

- Cash prize is \$500 or less.
- If ticket sales are limited to the nonprofits' membership.
- If the nonprofit follows all raffles requirements, including those required under a Class B raffle license.

It is our belief that SB 401 will enhance and simplify the process for our Chapters, the Auxiliary, and the Department to hold 50/50 raffles. These funds will provide needed services to our state's veterans, their families, and survivors.

Pursuant to the DAV Statement of Policy, DAV Wisconsin supports the passage of SB 401.

Thank you, Chairwoman Felzkowski, for holding this hearing and being a cosponsor of SB 401. This concludes our testimony. I would be pleased to respond to any questions you and other Committee Members may have.