

Poker Players Alliance Supports Appeal to Colorado Supreme Court

Washington, DC (August 12, 2009) –The Poker Players Alliance (PPA), the leading poker grassroots advocacy group with more than one million members nationwide and more than 13,000 in Colorado, today expressed its support for efforts to appeal a ruling in state intermediate court that poker is predominately a game of chance as part of Colorado v. Kevin Raley.

The defendant, Kevin Raley, will file a petition in Colorado Supreme Court requesting an appeal of the intermediate court's ruling that poker is gambling under Colorado law.

“The PPA is going to do everything in its power to support Mr. Raley's efforts in order to protect PPA members and all poker players in the state of Colorado,” said Gary Reed, PPA's Colorado State Director. “I am especially alarmed because this ruling ignores the abundance of research that proves poker is a game of skill and confuses rather than clarifies the matter for law enforcement that may use their scarce resources to raid and arrest poker players instead of investigating real unlawful activity in the state.”

In the original case, the county court allowed the jury to hear expert testimony by Professor Robert Hannum, Professor of Statistics at the University of Denver, that poker is a game of skill. Based on this testimony, and other evidence presented, the jury found Kevin Raley not guilty of illegal gambling. The Weld County District Attorney appealed that ruling, claiming that the testimony of Professor Hannum should have not been allowed because Colorado courts have already concluded that, as a matter of law, poker is gambling. Unfortunately, the district court overruled the trial judge's

determination to allow Professor Hannum to testify. The district court's decision does not overturn the jury's "not guilty" verdict, but it does put the future of poker in Colorado in legal limbo.

"Given the Weld County District Court judge's ruling that poker is gambling because of the small element of chance in the dealing of cards, one could easily presume that any game that depends even a little on chance – from Monopoly to Yahtzee to Candy Land – is gambling and therefore illegal in the state of Colorado," said John Pappas, executive director of the PPA. "We clearly think this is the wrong interpretation of the law, especially in regard to poker, and the PPA is committed to helping demonstrate to the Colorado Supreme Court the broad academic research that exists showing that poker is indeed a game of skill."

PPA has been involved in similar cases across the country, such as South Carolina, Kansas and Pennsylvania, where the question of skill versus chance is being reassessed in the courts in order to clarify existing law.

"The choice to petition the Colorado Supreme Court is about more than me or my friends, it's about all poker players' opportunity to ensure that current Colorado law recognizes that poker is a game of skill and is based on much more than the luck of the draw. So much has changed regarding poker and how the game is perceived publicly, it is disheartening to see this great game treated as a crime because of a misapplication of the law," said Kevin Raley.

To view the filings, please visit www.theppa.org