

Poker Players Alliance Applauds South Carolina Senate Vote Legalizing Home Poker Games

Washington, DC (January 26, 2011) – The Poker Players Alliance (PPA), the leading poker grassroots advocacy group with more than one million members nationwide and more than 10,000 in South Carolina, today praised the South Carolina Senate Judiciary Committee's 15-6 vote on Tuesday to advance S. 254 a bill legalizing games of poker in people's homes to the Senate floor. The bill would replace an anti-gambling law established in 1802 which banned any games with cards or dice.

„We are encouraged by the Senate's overwhelming vote to replace the antiquated law restricting South Carolina's basic citizen's rights to enjoy a friendly game of poker in their home," said John Pappas, executive director of the PPA. „Though the debate is far from over, this step represents a significant opportunity for lawmakers to fix misguided legislation on behalf of the individual rights of their constituents.“

Following the 2006 raid of a poker game in Mount Pleasant, S.C., the PPA supported the defendants in the 2009 trial court hearing, which resulted in the establishment of poker in South Carolina as a game of skill rather than a game of chance. Though ultimately the case ended with a guilty verdict due to the South Carolina law's broad definition of gambling, the PPA is working with the defendants to appeal the case to the South Carolina Supreme Court arguing that the proper test of gambling is whether a game is predominantly one of skill. S. 254 was amended in the Committee yesterday to clearly codify that a „bona fide contest of skill“ is determined by whether

the activity is predominantly skill. Numerous studies have confirmed that poker is a game of predominant skill rather than chance.

„Poker is an American pastime that is enjoyed by thousands of South Carolinians in the comfort of their own homes,“ said John Ridgeway, PPA’s South Carolina State Director. „Now is the time for lawmakers to protect their citizens’ individual rights and freedoms by distinguishing this game of skill from games of chance. PPA looks forward to working with the South Carolina Senate to pass this critical piece of legislation.“