

**KOMO Newsradio 100 – Washington’s Lottery interview on Newsline with Ken Schram**  
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You’re listening to Newsline with Ken Schram on KOMO News Radio.

**Ken:** 12 minutes shy of the two o’clock hour, thank you very much for hooking up and hanging with me here on Newsline PM, appreciate that a lot. So about five years ago, the Washington state put together this veterans’ legislative coalition and it was an innovations program and there is cash grants that are available up to \$1,400 to help veterans. If they needed education, if they need some employment assistance, they need training and this is as they transition back into civilian life. Well as we are all well aware, the state has hit the skids in terms of fiscal ability to pay for everything it wants to do so a new funding source for this had to be developed and that is what we’re talking about as we address this Hometown Heroes Raffle. To help explain it to us we got Bill Hanson. He is the Washington’s State Lottery Director which means he is ineligible to win all of the big money that is available out there. How are you Bill?

**Bill Hanson:** Good how are you Ken?

**Ken:** I am doing well. You never buy a Lottery ticket do you?

**Bill Hanson:** No that’s unfortunate. I took this job, my wife, she played the lottery every once in a while and it has been a little of a bone of contention.

**Ken:** Well it is a bone of contention that I haven’t won it yet so you are going to get it from both sides. That’s my new 401K plan you know? So tell me about the Hometown Heroes Raffle?

**Bill Hanson:** Well this last legislative session, the funding for the Veterans Innovation Program was going to go away and Senator Steve Conway was actually the one who sponsored this legislation and I thought it was a great idea. And lo and behold he passed it and so once a year we are going to a raffle for this program and we are excited about it. As I have said to some other people, I think regardless of how people may feel about the war in Afghanistan or Iraq I have never heard anybody say that they weren’t supportive of our troops and this is one of those things that is really going to help them.

**Ken:** So is all of the money raised in this raffle then going into the dedicated Veterans Innovation Program or does the state take a slice, is there some handling fees? Just so we know where the money is going.

**Bill Hanson:** The state is not taking a slice out of this. We do have to pay our retailers about 6 percent who are selling those tickets out there. That’s normal for any Lottery ticket.

**Ken:** Okay.

**Bill Hanson:** We have about a, I believe there is 300,000 tickets that are \$10 a piece. We have about \$1.4 million going back in prizes. And of course we have marketing expense for radio and television and that sort of thing and in the end if sell out all of these 300,000 of these tickets we hope to come pretty close to about \$450,000 back to this program.

**Ken:** Is that enough to sustain the program at a meaningful level?

**Bill Hanson:** They say it is. Now, we are being a little cautious, since this is the first time out for the Lottery to do this. So next year, if we sell these tickets out as fast as we believe we will, next year we'll probably have a larger raffle and that will get them some more money. I mean the more money we can put into this fund the better, is the way I think Senator Conway looks at it and certainly myself.

**Ken:** Well I am not a mathematician by the stretch of anyone's imagination but it seems to me that the odds of winning in the raffle are significantly better than they are at winning the Lotto or the Power Ball or any of the other big jackpot prizes.

**Bill Hanson:** They are better on this and we are going to have 24 prizes of \$50,000, 240 prizes of \$250 and 3,000 prizes at the \$50 level. And you know we did that on purpose. Our prize expense usually is about 60 percent. On this one we actually lowered it down a little bit so we could get more money into the program.

**Ken:** And plus, here is what I am thinking Bill, because the raffle is not going to take place until November correct?

**Bill Hanson:** Right.

**Ken:** November 10.

**Bill Hanson:** Right.

**Ken:** So the raffle tickets are available for sale now. They started yesterday.

**Bill Hanson:** They are.

**Ken:** Here is what I am thinking. I am thinking cause if people are like me, you go out, you buy one of these raffle tickets and come November 10 you're going to be going, "Where did I . . . hey honey where did I put that raffle ticket?" And so you know the person that is going to win one of those \$50,000 prizes is going to find, "oh yeah, I don't know what happened to that thing. Must have thrown it out." Will the money that is not awarded from the drawing go back into the program?

**Bill Hanson:** In this case I don't believe there is anything in the legislation that would provide for that.

**Ken:** Why not! Why didn't they think of that? People lose their Lottery tickets all the time. There's lots of unclaimed prizes.

**Bill Hanson:** Yeah. You know that is a good question. They probably should have written that in.

**Ken:** Yeah.

**Bill Hanson:** But, you know, maybe that can be remedied next time around.

**Ken:** You know what, I will tell you this. It is a great idea and I hope it is really successful. You're right. I think people do want to reach out and do something definitive and something positive and something concrete for veterans as they transition back into civilian life. Bill Hanson, Washington State Lottery director, good talking with you.

**Bill Hanson:** Good talking to you Ken, thank you.

**Ken:** I am going to pick up my Power Ball tickets on the way home.

**Bill Hanson:** Oh you're a good man.

**Ken:** Alright, have a good one.

**Bill Hanson:** Thank you. Buh-bye.

**Ken:** I am not a good man. That is my, I am telling you, the way the markets going that is my retirement plan. That's my 401K. I have gotta win that darn thing.

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