

February 29, 2024

House Ways and Means Committee
Room 131
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: HB 1218 – State Lottery – Internet Sales Authorization and Distribution of Proceeds

Dear Chair Atterbeary:

This letter is in opposition to *House Bill 1218 – State Lottery – Internet Sales Authorization and Distribution of Proceeds*. This bill calls for the legalization of iLottery in Maryland.

The Lottery is generally considered innocuous, but it is dangerously addictive. Since 2010, the Lottery has consistently been the most common type of gambling that Marylanders participate in. In that same timeframe, Lottery gambling has increased by 15.2% compared to casino gambling which has increased by 6.6%. Marylanders also play the Lottery more frequently than any other legal gambling in Maryland with 6.8% of 2020 Maryland prevalence study respondents saying they play the Lottery daily or several times a week; more than double any other type of gambling. Make no mistake, Marylanders love Lottery gambling and the Lottery is just as addictive as every other type of gambling, made more addictive with 24/7 online access.

This bill also brings to light an issue with the regulatory authority. The Maryland Lottery and Gaming Control Agency is tasked with the core mission to generate revenue in Maryland. A regulatory agency should not actively participate in the industry it is regulating.

We urge an unfavorable report on HB 1218.

Sincerely,
Dr. Shandra Parks
President
Maryland Council on Problem Gambling
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