

CRAIG J. ZUCKER
Legislative District 14
Montgomery County



James Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street, Room 120
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3625
800-492-7122 Ext. 3625
Craig.Zucker@senate.state.md.us

Budget and Taxation Committee
Chair, Capital Budget Subcommittee

Chair, Senate Democratic Caucus

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony of Senator Craig J. Zucker
Senate Bill 708/House Bill 922 - Sports Wagering - Independent Evaluation of Sports
Wagering Content - Required
Ways & Means Committee
March 20th, 2025
1:00PM
Position: Favorable

Good afternoon, Chair Atterbeary, Vice Chair Wilkins, and distinguished members of the committee. It is my pleasure to testify today in support of **Senate Bill 708 - Sports Wagering - Independent Evaluation of Sports Wagering Content**. Senate Bill 708 passed the Senate unanimously. I thank Senate President Ferguson for co-sponsoring this legislation and Delegate Ebersole for his leadership on the House cross-file, HB922.

With the growth of sports wagering around the country, independent, unlicensed/unpartnered sporters wagering “experts” and “influencers” have been advertising to consumers on sporting event outcomes. These outcomes include parlays, potential money lines, spreads, totals, futures, and various other outcomes without any regulations.

Senate Bill 708 is a consumer protection bill that will **require** a sports wagering licensee or sports wagering operator that advertises in the State to contract with a licensed independent evaluator to evaluate and rate the sports wagering licensee’s sports wagering content, experts, influencers, and content partners. These independent evaluators would not only protect consumers but also help distinguish legitimate betting platforms from illegal ones, resulting in a reduction of illegal gaming activities in our state.

Since this committee heard the cross-file, HB922, on February 13th, Senate Bill 708 has been amended with one key provision. The amendment adds: "SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That Section 1 of this Act is contingent on the State Lottery and Gaming Control Commission issuing licenses as required under § 9-1E-17 of the State Government Article to at least three independent evaluators." This change ensures

multiple operators in the marketplace, preventing monopoly and promoting competition.

This bill builds off legislation passed during the 2023 legislative session which authorized the Maryland Lottery and Gaming Control Commission to identify and license independent evaluators to evaluate and rate sports wagering content.

Senate Bill 708 will help protect consumers from deceptive marketing and advertising around sports wagering. For these reasons, **I urge a favorable report on Senate Bill 708.** Thank you for your kind consideration.