

Testimony Against
HB0017- Internet Gaming – Authorization and Implementation
Before the Maryland House Committee on Ways and Means
Monday, February 10, 2025
Submitted by
Nancy Stack, Dealer at Ocean Downs Casino

Good afternoon Chairwoman Atterbeary, Vice Chair Wilkens and members of the House Ways and Means Committee.

My name is Nancy Stack. In January of 2013, I was a 15-year resident of Cecil County. I voted to approve legalizing Video Lottery Terminals and also Table Games in Maryland. When I heard about an open house at the Perryville Casino to recruit Table Game Dealers I decided to attend. At that time, I was working full time at a moving company in Philadelphia. I wanted to work closer to home, but there were no jobs available for the same or better wages than the wages I had at the moving company.

At the Perryville open house, I was selected for a part time dealer position.

I took classes to become a dealer. Honestly, I did not like dealing at first. I realized that I could work as a Slot Attendant at the Perryville Casino and make what I made at my Philadelphia job. I was able to work my way up to being a full time Slot Attendant and quit the other job. This allowed me to support myself without the long commute. I paid attention and I got more familiar with how table games worked. A year later I became a full-time dealer which is more lucrative than the Slot Attendant job.

When table games opened at the Ocean Downs Casino, I visited the Ocean City area. It only took a few day trips to see what a nice area it is and that it would be a nice place to retire when I was ready. I applied to work as a Dealer at the Ocean Downs Casino and was hired as part of the first wave of Dealers at the Casino.

Fast forward to today. I have been able to maintain a positive quality of life for over ten years working in Maryland Casinos. I've worked lots of jobs in my lifetime. I thought that this would be the job from which I would eventually retire.

I am extremely concerned that my current standard of living is now in jeopardy because of iGaming. I saw in person the effect that internet Sports Betting had on foot traffic in the Casinos. Lines of customers waiting to place sport bets disappeared overnight. As a Dealer, 80-85% of my income is generated from tips given to me and my fellow dealers by customers.

There has been a lot of discussion about on-line poker and dealing with iGaming. These are not additions that are welcomed by Dealers at all, nor is this “job creation”. We make our money through our interaction with the players. A big part of the job is how we talk with our customers, how we share our game knowledge, how we joke and laugh with the players. Like other tipped workers, it’s the connections that we make our customers that lead to more generous tips.

Since COVID19 we have all become familiar with zoom and on-line platforms. It is in no way provide the same as personal interaction as in person interactions.

I’m here on behalf of my coworkers and particularly the dealers at the Ocean Downs Casino to let you know that we are very much opposed to iGaming being legalized in Maryland.

For those of us who work in Hospitality, year-round employment in Worcester and Wicomico Counties is limited due to the seasonal nature of the industry. The Casino, however, provides year-round hospitality jobs for cleaners, cooks, cage cashiers, slot attendants, security guards, IT workers, dishwashers, clerical and administrative workers and dealers.

We have been anticipating more growth with the opening of a hotel adjacent to Ocean Downs Casino. The introduction of iGaming will put an end to the hotel and any other development and job creation. In fact, it will cause customer traffic at all of the Maryland Casinos to decline which means less business, less tips and fewer jobs. It is not good public policy to drive customers away from the Casinos.

I am speaking on behalf of Maryland’s Casino workers and our families when I ask that you please enter an unfavorable reading for HB17.

Thank you for the opportunity to address the committee.