THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT

OFFICE OF THE COUNTY EXECUTIVE

BILL:	**Senate Bill 325 - Constitutional Amendment - Gaming - Expansion**
SPONSOR:	**Senators King et al.**
HEARING DATE:	**February 5, 2020**
COMMITTEE:	**Budget and Taxation**
CONTACT:	**Intergovernmental Affairs Office, 301-780-8411**

POSITION:	**SUPPORT**

The Office of the Prince George's County Executive **SUPPORTS Senate Bill 325 - Constitutional Amendment - Gaming - Expansion** which proposes a constitutional amendment to remove the restriction limiting the authority of the Maryland General Assembly (MGA) from authorizing additional forms of or expanding commercial gaming unless it has been approved via voter referendum and to update the constitution to reflect current law.

The MGA is currently only allowed to authorize additional forms of or an expansion of commercial gaming if it have been approved through a voter referendum. This makes it difficult for the state to weigh potential revenue sources to fund education considering the substantial contribution commercial gaming makes towards the Education Trust Fund. This constitutional amendment doesn't require any expansion of gaming in the State, but it does make it easier for the legislature to keep options on the table as it considers ways to fund its priorities, including for education.

Additionally, the Maryland Constitution currently limits the number of video lottery operation licenses to be licensed in the state to five, leaves Prince George's County off the list of locations that a video lottery operation license can be awarded, and caps the number of video lottery terminals in the state at 15,000. This language is out of date with current law which authorizes six video lottery operation licenses, including one in Prince George's County and allows 16,500 video lottery terminals in the state. The constitutional amendment would update the constitution to reflect current law.

For the reasons stated above, the Office of the Prince George's County Executive **SUPPORTS Senate Bill 325** and asks for a **FAVORABLE** report.