

HB-1224

Support Testimony Submitted by: Rick Weldon, President/CEO, Frederick County Chamber of Commerce

Dear Distinguished Chair Kaiser and Committee,

Located at the confluence of I270, I70 and Route 15, Longshots is perfectly positioned to capture bettors that travel past the property on their way to WV and PA.

The public infrastructure to support this type of use is already in place due to our adjacent large indoor shopping mall and nearby intensive commercial uses.

No residential neighborhoods, public school facilities, churches or other incompatible uses are proximate to this property. The property already plays host to large scale events and gatherings, at least did prior to the pandemic.

The prospective operator, in addition to being a woman-owned enterprise, comes from a well-respected family with a several generations-long history of commitment to our community.

When the MD Racing Commission contemplated the decision to locate an TOB operation at this property, they evaluated several of the same conditions and considerations that might legitimize your decision on sports wagering. All of their decision criteria have been validated by the professional manner in which LongShots has operated since receiving the OTB license.

We also know how important revenue generation will be to fulfilling our collective public policy goals over the next few years. Sports wagering promises an infusion of new streams of revenue. Expanding opportunities to siphon off gaming patrons traveling to WV and PA will directly and substantially increase Maryland's revenue capture.

I wouldn't be doing my job as the Frederick County Chamber CEO if I didn't also mention the potential for substantial investment and expansion of the Clarion property with the addition of sports wagering. The capital infusion will allow for upgrades and enhancements to this important Frederick-area "gateway" property.

I'm respectfully asking for the Ways & Means Committee's favorable report on HB1224

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