



**MARYLAND STATE
LICENSED BEVERAGE ASSOCIATION**

150 E Main Street, Suite 104, Westminster, MD 21157

TO: The Honorable Vanessa E. Atterbeary, Chair
Members, House Ways and Means Committee
The Honorable Steve Johnson

FROM: J. Steven Wise
Pamela Metz Kasemeyer
Danna L. Kauffman

DATE: March 2, 2022

RE: **SUPPORT** – House Bill 1179 – *State Lottery – Sales of Lottery Tickets and Tickets From Instant Ticket Lottery Machines – Commissions*

The Maryland State Licensed Beverage Association (MSLBA), which consists of approximately 1,000 Maryland businesses holding alcoholic beverage licenses (restaurants, bars, taverns and package stores), **supports** House Bill 1179.

House Bill 1179 will increase the sales commissions paid to lottery agents from the current 5.5% up to 6%, returning it to the rate adopted by the General Assembly in 2012. Agents are the backbone of the success of the Maryland Lottery. Found across the State in thousands of small businesses, lottery agents are the public face of the Lottery, interacting with customers, sometimes daily. The commission paid to agents reflect the important role they play in maintaining and growing the Lottery's customer base.

Going back to 2005, agents were paid a sales commission of 5.5%. That amount was reduced to 5.0% in 2009 when the State and many residents fell on more difficult times, and they remained at that level through 2013. The General Assembly then increased the commission to 6% effective upon the opening of the Horseshoe Casino in 2014, only to reduce it back to 5.5% before the higher rate ever really took effect.

The performance of the Lottery and its returns to the State have been excellent through good and bad times, however the costs to agents of running their businesses have steadily risen. The State's minimum wage has gone up considerably, increasing labor costs, as have other costs of keeping small businesses open, such as electricity, health insurance, and more recently other supplies. The increase contained in House Bill 1179 will help offset those cost increases and ensure that lottery agents are able to devote the same amount of time and commitment to manning the lottery ticket counter as they have for many years.

The MSLBA asks you to support the commission increase contained in House Bill 1179.

For more information call:

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