

HB 1288_FAV_Casino Testimony_B&T 03-30-2023.pdf

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Position: FAV



To: Senate Budget and Taxation Committee

Re: HB 1288 (Video Lottery Employee Licenses – Crimes of Moral Turpitude or Gambling Offenses - Alterations)

Date: March 30, 2023

Position: Favorable

Maryland’s six casinos support HB 1288 (Video Lottery Employee Licenses – Crimes of Moral Turpitude or Gambling Offenses - Alterations).

An individual is required to have a video lottery employee license from the Maryland Lottery and Gaming Control Agency (“MLGCA”) in order to be employed as a video lottery employee. Under current law, an individual is disqualified from being licensed as a video lottery employee if the person has been convicted (or is under active parole or probation) for any crime involving moral turpitude or gambling within the prior 7 years, or is being prosecuted for such a crime.

The casinos support creating an exception to disqualification if the conviction or prosecution involves a nonviolent misdemeanor (non-gaming) crime for which the applicant participated in and completed a problem-solving court program, as is proposed in HB 1288. These voluntary programs under the Administrative Office of the Courts provide a therapeutic, collaborative, non-adversarial approach to judicial supervision of eligible offenders whose offense was related to a substance use problem (such as drug court, DUI courts, mental health court, etc.).

The bill would give a second chance to individuals who have made mistakes in their past, but have taken the initiative to improve themselves and address the substance use problem that led to their crimes by participating in a problem solving court program. The bill would expand the pool of applicants available to casinos as they work to keep their positions filled in labor markets that can often be challenging, but would not supplant their hiring and vetting processes to ensure that positions are appropriately filled.

For these reasons, the casinos request a favorable report on HB 1288.