

# **HB1288 FAV**

Uploaded by: Delegate Charles

Position: FAV

NICK CHARLES  
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Ways and Means Committee

Subcommittees

Racing and Gaming

Revenues

Chair

Prince George's County House Delegation



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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Favorable Testimony

**HB1288: Video Lottery Employee Licenses - Crimes of Moral Turpitude or Gambling Offenses – Alterations**

Good Afternoon Chair Atterbeary, Vice Chair Wilkins and esteemed colleagues of the Ways and Means Committee. I respectfully urge the Committee to adopt a favorable report on HB1288.

State gaming license requirements in Maryland often disqualify individuals charged with non-violent drug offenses from obtaining casino gaming licenses, preventing such individuals from working in casinos. These archaic laws make it challenging for casino operators, including MGM National Harbor, to offer life changing careers, despite applicants being otherwise qualified.

In January 2020, the New Jersey State Legislature passed a Bill that would allow individuals who complete “Recovery Court” to be eligible to obtain a casino licenses. This Bill, signed by Governor Phil Murphy in 2020, allows people that have struggled with addiction issues an opportunity at a career that before has been challenging for many in the same situation to find.

HB1288 amends Subtitle 1A - Video Lottery Terminals § 9-1A-14 that disqualifies certain individuals from obtaining gaming licenses. This bill will qualify licensure of individuals who have graduated from Problem Solving Courts (e.g. Drug Court, DUI Court, Re-entry Court) allowing casinos throughout Maryland to give these individuals an opportunity for good paying jobs with strong health care benefits. There are currently 62 Problem Solving Courts in the State and last year 485 applicants graduated from the program. Every County in the State, save 2 out of 23, has these Courts and they have been regarded as highly effective at changing behavior.

Supporting re-entry resources is critical for our State to ensure we reduce recidivism and grow our workforce. One of the most important resources we can equip people with is meaningful employment and job opportunities. These individuals have gone through a Problem Solving Court system and should therefore be able to secure these licensures under the recognition that they have changed the behavior that caused them to become involved in the judicial system. HB1288 costs the State \$0 and would benefit it immensely.

For these reasons, I once more respectfully urge a favorable report on HB429. Thank you. If there are any questions, please reach out to our Office directly and we will respond as soon as possible.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nick Charles".

Delegate Nick Charles

Chairman, Prince George's County House Delegation

**2023 - HB 1288 - FAVORABLE- Employ Prince George's**

Uploaded by: Grason Wiggins

Position: FAV



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*Walter L. Simmons, President*

## House Bill 1288

Committee: Ways and Means

Date: March 14, 2023

**Position: Favorable**

This testimony is offered on behalf of Employ Prince George's, the principal workforce development entity for Prince George's County that provides nationally recognized community and workforce development programming. At Employ Prince George's, we deliver a demand-driven workforce system that generates economic mobility for workers, delivers qualified workers to businesses, and drives economic success for every Marylander.

As the administrative and fiscal agent of the Prince George's County Workforce Development Board, Employ Prince George's is responsible for operating the Prince George's County Public Workforce System, which serves over 25,000 job seekers and businesses annually. Employ Prince George's offers a diverse portfolio of workforce development programs that have demonstrated success training and connecting returning citizens to careers and opportunities that promote economic mobility. As a result, Employ Prince George's fully supports the expansion of workforce opportunities for returning citizens.

To connect more Marylanders to sustainable careers within the lottery and gaming industry, House Bill 1288 (HB 1288) ensures that more returning citizens are eligible to obtain a video lottery employee license. Modeled after New Jersey law, HB 1288 provides socio-economic opportunity to applicants who were charged with nonviolent crimes for which applicants completed a problem-solving court program.

According to the Maryland Lottery and Gaming Control Agency, more than 7,000 Marylanders are employed by the State's casinos. Moreover, revenue generated from the State's lottery and gaming industry supports education, public health, and environmental programs. By removing unnecessary barriers to licensure, HB 1288 ensures that more returning citizens have opportunities to work in the State's thriving lottery and gaming industry that benefits the public.

As the administrative and fiscal agent of the Prince George's County Workforce Development Board, Employ Prince George's is responsible for operating the Prince George's County Public Workforce System, which serves over 25,000 job seekers and businesses annually. Employ Prince George's offers a diverse portfolio of workforce development programs that have demonstrated success training and connecting returning citizens to careers and opportunities that promote economic mobility. As a result, Employ Prince George's fully supports the expansion of workforce opportunities for returning citizens, including video lottery employee licenses.

HB 1288 removes barriers to licensure and provides opportunities for sustainable careers to more Marylanders. **For the aforementioned reasons, Employ Prince George's respectfully requests a favorable report from the Committee on HB 1288.**

# **HB 1288\_FAV\_Casino Testimony.pdf**

Uploaded by: Kerry Watson

Position: FAV



To: House Ways & Means Committee

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

Date: March 14, 2023

Position: Favorable

Maryland’s six casinos support HB1288 (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 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 HB1288.