



Wes Moore, Governor · Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor · Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H., Secretary

February 22, 2024

The Honorable Vanessa E. Atterbeary
Chair, Ways and Means Committee
Room 131, House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: House Bill 1087 – Institutions of Higher Education - Online Gambling - Prohibition – Letter of Support with Amendments

Dear Chair Atterbeary and Committee Members:

The Maryland Department of Health (Department) respectfully submits this letter of support with amendments for House Bill (HB) 1087 – Institutions of Higher Education - Online Gambling - Prohibition.

HB 1087 aims to prohibit individuals from participating in online gambling while they are physically present on the premises of an institution of higher education in the State. According to a report by the International Center for Responsible Gambling, approximately 6% of college students suffer from a severe gambling problem. As sports betting is now legal in most states, sports gambling companies have begun to set up shop on college campuses. Some universities have entered into agreements with these companies, allowing them to advertise on campus, in athletic venues, and send emails to students' email inboxes.

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), reports that roughly 75% of undergraduate students are aged between 18 and 24.¹ It is important to note that individuals under the age of 21 cannot place bets on sporting events in Maryland. Moreover, all sports wagering licensees must decline wagers from those under 21 years old. This step is taken to restrict college students' access to online gambling and encourage them to practice responsible gambling habits.

It is worth noting that gambling is not just limited to college students. Recent studies have shown that between 60% and 80% of high schoolers have reported gambling for money in the past year. Shockingly, up to 6% of high schoolers are addicted to gambling, as reported by the International Centre for Youth Gambling Problems and High-Risk Behaviors.² Given the additional risk to high schoolers, the Department respectfully proposes an amendment to the legislation to extend the prohibition to include high schools.

¹ <https://www.collegeranker.com/what-is-the-average-age-of-college-students/#:~:text=In%202020%2C%20approximately%2057%25%20of,ages%20of%2018%20and%2024.>

² <https://abcnews.go.com/US/online-gambling-youth-worries-experts-teen-sports-betting/story?id=94577595>

If you have any further questions, please contact Sarah Case-Herron, Director, Office of Governmental Affairs, at sarah.case-herron@maryland.gov.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "LH Scott", enclosed in a light blue rectangular border.

Laura Herrera Scott, M.D., M.P.H.
Secretary

AMENDMENTS.

AMENDMENT NO. 1

On page 2, Amend Line 4, INSTITUTION OF SECONDARY EDUCATION AND HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE STATE.

AMENDMENT NO. 2

On page 2, Amend Line 5, (1) ON OR BEFORE AUGUST 1, 2024, EACH INSTITUTION OF SECONDARY EDUCATION AND HIGHER

AMENDMENT NO. 3

On page 2, Amend Line 17, (D) EACH INSTITUTION OF SECONDARY EDUCATION AND HIGHER EDUCATION IN THE STATE SHALL