



February 22, 2024

House Ways and Means Committee
Room 131
House Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: HB 1087 – Institutions of Higher Education – Online Gambling – Prohibition

Dear Chair Atterbeary:

This letter is in support of *House Bill 1087 – Institutions of Higher Education – Online Gambling – Prohibition*. HB 1087 prohibits online gambling on the campuses of Maryland colleges and universities. This bill also requires each institution to create a geofence around their campus's perimeter, preventing access to online gambling within the bounds of the campus. HB 1087 safeguards the academic and personal development of Maryland's future leaders.

Online gambling poses a threat to the educational environment of Maryland's college campuses, as it can lead to detrimental consequences for students' mental health, academic performance, and overall well-being.¹ More specifically, allowing online gambling platforms to be accessed on campus exacerbates the risks associated with addiction, diverts students' focus away from their studies, and places their academic achievements in jeopardy.² The most recent survey of Statewide Gambling Prevalence in Maryland found a high level of online sports gambling among young people.³ Among Marylanders aged 18 to 24, 21% have wagered on sports in their lifetime.⁴ Of that group, 57% gambled on sports in the past year – 26% doing so online.

Prohibiting online gambling on campuses and implementing measures to enforce that prohibition is an effective way to address the issue. Establishing a geofence around the perimeter of each institution of higher education shows that education comes before gambling. This geofence will act as a protective barrier that prevents students from accessing inappropriate gambling content on campus property, thereby maintaining an environment that is most conducive to learning.

¹ <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC8930883/>

² *Id.*

³ J. Tracy & Jessica Brown, *Statewide Gambling Prevalence in Maryland: 2022*, Maryland Center of Excellence on Problem Gambling, 2022.

⁴ *Id.*



UNIVERSITY of MARYLAND
SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

HB 1087 supports the mental health and academic success of Maryland students. For these reasons, we support HB 1087. If you would like more information, please contact Mary Drexler at mdrexler@som.umaryland.edu.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mary Drexler". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Mary" and last name "Drexler" clearly legible.

Mary Drexler, MSW