

Testimony of The Cordish Companies and Live! Casino Hotel Maryland

Presented by Ryan Eller, Executive Vice President and General Manager

In SUPPORT of SB 0310

Committee for Ways & Means

March 26, 2025

On behalf of The Cordish Companies and Live! Casino Hotel Maryland, I respectfully submit this written testimony in support of SB 0310, which will strengthen education around problem gambling by increasing awareness of the relationship between addictive behaviors and youth suicide.

We have seen a recent surge in problem gambling behaviors nationwide, correlated to the proliferation of on-line gambling and access to casino gambling using mobile devices. Gambling is no longer tethered to traditional casinos with strict physical controls over age and access. Maryland has followed suit and now offers mobile sports wagering throughout the state. The increase in problem gambling behavior has become more publicly evident as gambling continues to expand its footprint online:

- A chorus of news agencies have opined or published exposes on online gambling, including The Washington Post, CBS News, The Atlantic, The New Republic, Bloomberg, The Wall Street Journal, 60 Minutes, The Baltimore Sun and more;
- Public health and problem gambling experts, such as Shekhar Saxena, Professor of Global Health at the Harvard T.H. Chan School of Public Health, have explained that “Online gambling can be 10 times more harmful than other forms of gambling;”¹

Gambling in Maryland remains limited to traditional Casinos and on-line Sportsbetting, yet 14% of Maryland high school students aged 15 or younger and 20% of older teens have gambled according to the Maryland Alliance for Responsible Gaming. Furthermore, 38% of online gamblers are between the age of 18-24 according to the National Council on Problem Gambling. It follows that

¹ *Deseret News*, “Online gambling: the stakes for public health” (Jan. 24, 2025).

we take steps to educate and protect our youth from these increased risks and attempt to provide resources to mitigate and, hopefully, avoid harmful behavior through education.

SB 0310 would bolster the State's education around problem gaming and other addictive behaviors that can contribute to strengthening measures around suicide prevention. We support a favorable report on SB 0310.