

I am writing to respectfully urge you to **vote against any bill that would expand gambling opportunities for the citizens of Maryland.**

While expanded gambling may appear to offer financial benefits to the state, the **human cost far outweighs any monetary gain.**

I know this personally. I am a **recovering gambling addict**, and I have seen firsthand the devastation that gambling addiction can bring. It touched every part of my life—my work, my family, my relationships, and my health. Here I am four years later still trying dig out of the financial mess my gambling addiction created.

I am a **highly educated professional**, yet I was still pulled into the grip of gambling addiction. Addiction does not discriminate. It can affect anyone.

Maryland already has many gambling opportunities. Expanding them further—especially through **easier and more accessible platforms such as online gambling and expanded sports betting—will only increase the number of Maryland families who suffer the same devastation.**

When weighing this issue, I urge you to remember that **people must weigh more than profits.**

I am also speaking for the many voices that cannot be here today—the individuals who lost their lives after gambling addiction overtook them. Their families and loved ones will never again hug them or hear their voices. The pressures and losses caused by gambling addiction became too much to bear.

Thanks to **Gamblers Anonymous of Maryland and the support of caring peer mentors**, I was fortunate enough to find recovery and rebuild my life. Not everyone is that fortunate.

Please do not make gambling even more accessible in our state. The easier it becomes, the more lives it will quietly destroy.

Before voting yes on any expansion of gambling, I ask you to **picture the tear-filled eyes of the families who have lost loved ones to this addiction.**

Their lives mattered.

**Lives outweigh money.**

Please vote **NO** on expanding gambling in Maryland.

Lisa Anne Johnson

MD Resident