

MARYLAND RETAILERS ALLIANCE

The Voice of Retailing in Maryland



**SB639 Sports Wagering - Wagers on Historical Horse Races - Authorization
Budget and Taxation Committee
February 25, 2026**

Position: Favorable

Background: SB639 would allow sports wagering on historical horse race simulations.

Comments: The Maryland Retailers Alliance supports SB639 Sports Wagering - Wagers on Historical Horse Races - Authorization, which would authorize the use of historic horse racing (HHR) machines at off-track betting (OTB) establishments in Maryland. HHR machines allow players to bet on the outcome of historic horse races, with identifying historic details removed.

Maryland's OTB facilities compete for customers with not only casinos and racetracks but also the online betting industry, which accounts for almost 98% of sports betting taking place in the state. Allowing OTB establishments to offer unique gaming opportunities with HHR machines will help to attract new players to these businesses that cannot compete with larger, well-known entities like racetracks and casinos. Bringing HHR to OTBs on this side of the Potomac River will also keep Maryland gaming dollars in the state, as HHR enthusiasts currently travel to play in Virginia which has already authorized this gaming use.

The entire local hospitality industry benefits from a community's ability to successfully attract visitors to entertainment epicenters like casinos. Expanding the gaming opportunities that are available at OTB establishments will help drive economic growth in Maryland's jurisdictions that do not currently benefit from large facilities like racetracks and casinos. As interest in gaming continues to expand in Maryland, allowing HHR machines at OTB locations will promote investment and revenue growth throughout the state.

MRA would respectfully urge a favorable report on SB639. Thank you for your consideration.