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Senate Budget and Tax Committee

**House Bill 195 - State Lottery and Gaming Control Commission - Authority to Conduct
Studies on the Use of Emerging Technology and the Workgroup on Gambling
Prevention Technology**

Letter of Support

April 2, 2026

Chair Guzzone, Vice Chair Rosapepe, and Members of the Committee:

Bowie State University (BSU) appreciates the opportunity to submit favorable testimony on House Bill 195, as amended. As amended, this bill authorizes the Lottery and Gaming Control Commission to collaborate with Bowie State University, Morgan State University, and the Maryland Center of Excellence on Problem Gambling to study trends and emerging technologies aimed at creating a safer, more transparent gambling environment. The bill also establishes a workgroup to study best practices in gambling prevention technology, including geofencing, to better understand the extent of problem gambling on college campuses.

BSU supports the establishment of this workgroup and appreciates Delegate Queen and representatives of the State Lottery and Gaming Control Commission for their collaboration in addressing our initial concerns and reaching agreement on these amendments.

Bowie State University's Center for Data Analytics (CDA) serves as a data-driven resource for faculty, students, and external partners, providing applied research support and expertise in statistical methods and data analysis. The Center is funded through the University's operating budget and maintains a small staff focused on both academic and applied analytics.

Separately, BSU recently received a \$7,000 grant from the Maryland Center of Excellence on Problem Gambling to support prevention-focused education, outreach, dissemination of materials, and review of campus policies, with activities beginning next month.

Data on student gambling at BSU comes primarily from the Maryland College Alcohol Survey (MD-CAS). The 2025 survey shows that of participating full-time undergraduate students (N=194), 25% reported gambling in the past year, including 16% who participated in sports betting. Most activity was infrequent and low-stakes, with a majority of sports bettors wagering less than \$10 and betting once per year or less. These findings underscore the need for careful, evidence-based approaches to gambling prevention.

While BSU supports the goal of promoting safer gambling, we have concerns about implementing or evaluating technologies such as geofencing without further study. These tools present significant data validity and interpretation challenges, including the inability to reliably distinguish students from faculty, staff, visitors, or members of the public who may be on or near campus. Geofencing data also cannot meaningfully link access attempts to age, enrollment status, or gambling risk without potentially intrusive data matching. Results may be further distorted by shared devices, multiple devices per individual, or the use of VPNs, which can circumvent restrictions.

Importantly, a reduction in access attempts does not necessarily indicate reduced gambling harm and may instead reflect behavioral workarounds. There is also a risk of unintended consequences, including shifting students toward unregulated or illegal gambling platforms that lack consumer protections, or moving activity off campus into private settings where risky behavior is more difficult to identify and address. Notably, BSU's existing Wi-Fi network already blocks gaming websites and other inappropriate content.

BSU looks forward to participating in the workgroup and contributing its expertise to help inform practical, data-driven, and effective gambling safeguards.

Thank you for your consideration. For questions, please contact **Michael Harrison, Director of Government and Community Relations, Bowie State University**, at mlharrison@bowiestate.edu.