

MARYLAND RETAILERS ALLIANCE

The Voice of Retailing in Maryland



HB1343 Internet Gaming - Authorization and Implementation Ways and Means Committee March 5, 2026

Position: Unfavorable

Background: HB1343 would legalize internet gaming in Maryland.

Comments: The Maryland Retailers Alliance (MRA) strongly opposes the implementation of internet gaming (iGaming) in Maryland due to the potential job losses and long-term stagnation of revenue associated with the policy.

Proponents of iGaming claim that online gambling would not have a negative impact on brick-and-mortar casinos in Maryland and that this policy would increase revenue for the State; the fiscal note for HB1343, however, predicts a cannibalization rate to casinos of at least 10% once iGaming is fully implemented. While local distribution of iGaming revenue may make up the difference for local budgets, this still represents an overall loss of revenue for the State. Fewer patrons at physical casinos means fewer jobs and decreased revenue in the surrounding communities. Many of Maryland's Main Street casinos are located in close proximity to Maryland's casinos. Each district near a brick-and-mortar casino benefits directly from its proximity to the facility and would be negatively impacted by a downturn of the casino industry. Decreased patronage of casinos equals fewer tourism dollars spent at every local restaurant, hotel, and retailer operating around and depending on these entertainment epicenters.

Pennsylvania's iGaming revenue increases are directly correlated to a decrease in revenue at brick-and-mortar casinos in the state. iGaming would adversely affect Maryland's existing casinos, reducing jobs and negatively impacting the tourism economy that has grown since casinos began operating in the state. We would urge the body to seriously consider these concerns and vote unfavorably on HB1343.

Thank you for your consideration.