

March 3, 2026

Chair Wilkins, Vice Chair Feldmark, and Members of the Ways and Means Committee:

My name is Rich DiPietro, and I'm here on behalf of Chesapeake Gaming, a proud woman-owned small business serving Boonsboro and Washington County. I strongly urge a favorable report on House Bill 1240.

Chesapeake Gaming is more than a business. It's our passion. My mother and I built this company together from the ground up. We invested our own savings, worked countless hours, and created a responsible, community-centered venue that supports Maryland racing and local jobs. Today, without Historical Horse Racing, we are on the brink of closure. This bill is not about expansion, it's about survival.

HB 1240 is a jobs bill. With HHR, we can create approximately 100 new permanent jobs using union labor. Without it, those jobs disappear, and so does our business. That means lost paychecks, lost local spending, and lost economic activity in Western Maryland.

At the same time, Maryland is losing an estimated \$40 million annually to surrounding states like West Virginia, Pennsylvania, and Virginia, and that number will only grow as new gaming options open just across our borders. HB 1240 keeps Maryland dollars in Maryland and is projected to generate roughly \$100 million in new State tax revenue, without requiring any public investment.

This is also about opportunity. My mother has been a champion of Maryland's Minority Business Enterprise program. She has personally helped 15 women and minority entrepreneurs start their own businesses and was honored in 2007 as Woman Business of the Year in Baltimore County. Supporting Chesapeake Gaming is not just supporting one business, it is investing in a proven leader who has helped expand opportunity for others and will continue to do so.

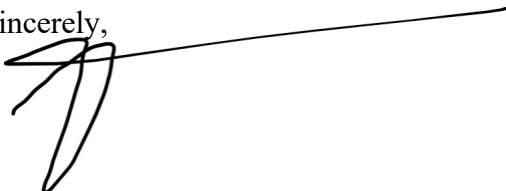
We are asking for the opportunity to compete, to protect jobs, and to keep revenue here at home.

For our family, this is personal. For Maryland, it is practical.

We respectfully ask for a favorable report on House Bill 1240.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Rich DiPietro', with a long horizontal line extending to the right across the page.