



**House Ways & Means Committee  
March 5, 2026**

**House Bill 1255 – Expansion of Commercial Gaming - Internet Gaming  
Referendum**

**Oppose**

The National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence-MD strongly opposes House Bill 1255. We believe that making gambling as easy as picking up your phone at any hour of any day is a dangerous step, especially for young people. This issue should not be put to a popular vote.

Evidence is growing that shows more and more young people are accessing gambling activities online. While no one in this General Assembly is advocating for young people to gamble, we know they are gambling and access will increase. The 2021-22 Youth Risk Behavior Survey showed that among high school students in Maryland, 14% at or under the age of 14 reported gambling, and that number rose to 21% of those at least 18 years old.

Overall, research shows that more people in Maryland are gambling, and the number of people who are considered to have a gambling disorder has risen as well. ([Statewide Gambling Prevalence in Maryland: 2022](#))

We need more research related to mobile gaming. We need to learn lessons from other states and countries around the world. We should not be rushing into iGaming without understanding the impact and until we believe we have the resources to mitigate the harms it will lead to.

We respectfully oppose House Bill 1255.