



Letter of Information on HB1255
Expansion of Commercial Gaming - Internet Gaming Referendum
March 5th, 2026

Chair Wilkins and distinguished members of the Ways & Means Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide this letter of information on HB1255, which would authorize and implement internet casino wagering in Maryland.

Rush Street Interactive (“RSI”) is a leading regulated online casino and sports betting operator in North America and currently operates as a Maryland legal online sportsbook under the BetRivers brand. We operate exclusively in regulated jurisdictions and have been a pioneer in U.S. online casino gaming since launching our first regulated real-money platform in 2016. Today, RSI operates online casino platforms in five U.S. states — as many as any operator — as well as in other regulated international markets.

Online Casino Gaming Is Already Occurring in Maryland — Without Safeguards

The policy question before the Committee is not whether online casino gaming will occur in Maryland. It already is.

Marylanders are wagering billions of dollars annually on illegal, unregulated and offshore casino websites. These operators actively target states that lack a legal online casino option. Their platforms are sophisticated, widely marketed, and often indistinguishable from licensed operators, but they:

- Do not conduct meaningful age or identity verification.
- Do not enforce self-exclusion programs.
- Do not offer deposit, time, or wager limits.
- Do not monitor play for signs of problem gambling.
- Provide no consumer recourse or regulatory oversight
- Pay no taxes to the State of Maryland.

Illegal and unregulated online casino gambling already operates in Maryland. The State currently has zero oversight, zero enforcement authority, and receives zero tax revenue from this activity.

Demand Exists — Regulation Channels It Into a Controlled Market

Demand for online casino gaming is not going away. Prohibiting a regulated option does not eliminate participation; it simply pushes players to unregulated operators.

Legalization channels existing activity into a framework Maryland can regulate, supervise, and tax.

Many of Maryland's surrounding states — including Pennsylvania, New Jersey, Delaware, and West Virginia — have established regulated online casino markets that generate hundreds of millions of dollars annually in tax revenue under strict regulatory oversight and responsible gaming requirements.

With a reasonable and competitive tax framework, Maryland likewise could generate hundreds of millions annually in new tax revenue to support education and other State priorities — revenue that is currently flowing to illicit and unregulated operators.

Regulation Enables Comprehensive Responsible Gaming and Real-Time Oversight

The most important distinction between regulated and illegal markets is player protection. Regulated sites offer:

- Multi-layer age and identity verification and strict geolocation enforcement.
- Clear game rules, visible odds disclosures, and independent game certification.
- Segregated and protected player funds with secure data handling.
- Customizable time, deposit, and wagering limits; cooling-off periods; and self-exclusion programs.
- Access to continuous real-time monitoring of account activity with automated risk scoring and trained staff intervention.
- Full access to wagering and deposit history with standardized player notifications.
- 24/7 customer support and trained responsible gaming specialists.

These protections — particularly real-time monitoring and proactive intervention — do not exist in the unregulated market. Offshore operators offer no audits, no monitoring, and no accountability.

Regulation allows Maryland not only to capture revenue, but to lead in responsible gaming standards and consumer protection.

Maintaining the Status Quo Is a Policy Choice

- Marylanders will continue wagering on illegal offshore sites.
- Consumer protections will remain unenforceable.
- Problem gambling indicators will go undetected.
- The State will receive no tax revenue.
- Regulators will have no oversight authority.

The choice before the Committee is not between gambling and no gambling. It is between unregulated risk and a system Maryland can control.

RSI stands ready to work with policymakers and regulators to ensure that any authorized online casino framework reflects the highest standards of oversight, responsible gaming, and consumer protection.

Thank you for your consideration.