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Budget and Taxation Committee
Chair, Capital Budget Subcommittee

Chair, Senate Democratic Caucus

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony of Senator Craig J. Zucker
Senate Bill 970- Sports Wagering - Independent Evaluation of Sports Wagering
April 2nd, 2026
1:00PM
Position: Favorable

Good afternoon, Chair Wilkins, Vice Chair Feldmark, and distinguished members of the Ways and Means committee. It is my pleasure to testify today in support of **Senate Bill 970- Sports Wagering - Independent Evaluation of Sports Wagering**.

With the growth of sports wagering around the country, independent, unlicensed/unpartnered sports wagering “experts” and “influencers” have been advertising to consumers on sporting event outcomes. These outcomes include parlays, potential money lines, spreads, totals, futures, and various other outcomes without any regulations.

Senate Bill 970 is a consumer protection bill that will **require** a sports wagering licensee or sports wagering operator that advertises in the State to contract with a licensed independent evaluator to evaluate and rate the sports wagering licensee’s sports wagering content, experts, influencers, and content partners. These independent evaluators would not only protect consumers but also help distinguish legitimate betting platforms from illegal ones, resulting in a reduction of illegal gaming activities in our state.

SB970 is identical to the bill passed by the Senate in 2025, and has been drafted and introduced to include the amendments made by the Budget and Tax committee last year: "SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That Section 1 of this Act is contingent on the State Lottery and Gaming Control Commission issuing licenses as required under § 9-1E-17 of the State Government Article to at least three independent evaluators." This change ensures multiple operators in the marketplace, preventing monopoly and promoting competition.

This bill builds off legislation passed during the 2023 legislative session which authorized the Maryland Lottery and Gaming Control Commission to identify and license independent evaluators to evaluate and rate sports wagering content.

Senate Bill 970 will help protect consumers from deceptive marketing and advertising around sports wagering. For these reasons, **I urge a favorable report on Senate Bill 970.** Thank you for your kind consideration.