



To: House Ways and Means Committee

Date: March 13, 2026

Re: Testimony in Opposition to House Bill 1587 (Gaming – Electronic Instant Bingo Machines – Operation and Maximum Number of Machines)

Maryland’s six casinos oppose HB1587, which would significantly increase the availability of "slot-like" machines in Maryland and result in cannibalization of Maryland’s existing gaming tax revenue, job losses among our workforces, and less overall tax revenue for the State

Electronic instant bingo machines mimic slot machine play and therefore compete with VLTs and casinos generally. HB1587 would double the number of these machines in the State, adding nearly 900 machines to compete with the VLT machines at casinos. Under HB 1587, these machines would be allowed to even more closely resemble slot machines by eliminating the requirement to print a paper ticket for each game played. The State Admissions and Amusements tax rate on these machines is 20%, which is less than half the average tax rate that the casinos pay on VLTs (approximately 51%). This means that the State loses at least \$0.31 for every dollar that is diverted from VLT play to an electronic bingo machine, the vast majority of which is revenue that would have gone to the Education Trust Fund.

The partnership between Maryland and its VLT licensees is one of the most successful partnerships to fund public education in the nation. Maryland's six casinos drive significant State revenues and other benefits to the State’s economy.

- Maryland has the 19<sup>th</sup> largest population in the country but generates the 4<sup>th</sup> highest gaming tax revenues.
- Maryland's six commercial casinos support 15,000+ direct jobs, generate \$3.0 billion in economic impact; and create \$962.2 million in tax impacts.<sup>1</sup>
- Maryland has one of the highest gaming tax revenues as a percentage of corporate income tax collected in the country, at 52%. In other words, the 6 casinos in Maryland pay over half as much tax annually as **the thousands of other corporations doing business in the state each year.** (\$848 million Gaming Tax v \$1.6 billion corporate income tax.<sup>2</sup>)

**Since the inception of commercial gaming in Maryland, Maryland casinos have provided \$6.7 billion to the Maryland Education Trust Fund and over \$9 billion in overall gaming taxes. They have also generated over \$56 million in problem gambling fund contributions.**

In FY2025 alone, Maryland’s six casinos generated \$606 million for the Education Trust Fund. Casino revenues also contributed to the following important additional programs in FY2025:

- \$105 million in local aid
- \$95 million to Maryland's horse racing industry

<sup>1</sup> Source: American Gaming Association

<sup>2</sup> Source: January 2023 DLS Fiscal Briefing

- \$20 million to the Maryland's Small, Minority and Women-owned Business Fund; and
- \$4.5 million to the Responsible Gaming Fund.

Increasing the availability of slot-like machines will negatively impact State gaming revenues to fund public K-12 education and these other important programs.

**Diverting gaming from casinos to electronic bingo halls will undercut responsible gaming initiatives, which lack essential regulatory oversight to protect the public.**

- Maryland's Voluntary Exclusion Program (VEP) is a core component of the State's responsible gaming efforts, and helps to ensure that at-risk people are protected.
- The state created the VEP in 2011 to assist people who have a gambling problem and choose to exclude themselves from Maryland casinos, lottery, and/or certain bingo halls in Anne Arundel and Calvert Counties.
- The Maryland Lottery and Gaming Control Agency staffs each casino in Maryland at all times that the casino floor is open to enroll people into the VEP.
- Maryland's casinos are responsible for ensuring that individuals who are on the VEP list do not have access to gaming on their properties.
- As a result of these requirements and other regulations by the MLGCA, Maryland's casinos are one of the most heavily regulated businesses in Maryland.
- HB1587 contains no responsible gaming protections for the slot-like games that would proliferate under the bill.
- Without proven responsible gaming measures in place, excluded patrons can simply avoid Maryland's casinos and frequent bingo halls without trained staff.
- The operators of electronic bingo machines are also not subject to regulatory oversight and control to protect the public that is exercised by the MLGCA over casinos.

**As the State's partners in funding the Blueprint for Maryland's Future and in ensuring that effective responsible gaming measures are in place, we respectfully request the Ways and Means Committee to give an unfavorable report to HB1587.**