

RON WATSON, PH.D
Legislative District 23B
Prince George's County

Judiciary Committee

Joint Committee on Cybersecurity,
Information Technology and Biotechnology



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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 20, 2020

Testimony of Delegate Ron Watson

FAVORABLE SUPPORT OF HB0605

Constitutional Amendment - Gaming – Expansion

Dear Madame Chair and Members of the Ways and Means Committee,

I urge you to vote a favorable report on HB 0605, a Constitutional Amendment – Gaming-Expansion. This bill seeks to provide an amendment to the State Constitutions to repeal the use of a referendum to expand commercial gaming and removes the restriction that the General Assembly may authorize additional forms or expansion of commercial gaming through a referendum. However, a constitutional amendment approved by voters would still be required for any future expansion of the number of video lottery terminals or licenses. If passed, this amendment must be approved by voters for the general election.

In the current law, the Maryland Constitution limits the number of video lottery terminals and video lottery operation licenses authorized during the 2007 special session amended the Maryland Constitution so that after November 15, 2008, the General Assembly may only authorize additional forms or expansion of commercial gaming if approved through a referendum by a majority of voters in a general election.

The bill has successfully been approved in the Senate with a 46-1 vote. I strongly urge you to support HB 605: Constitutional Amendment- Gaming-Expansion.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Ron L. Watson".

Delegate Ron Watson, Ph.D.

Legislative District, 23B