



MGC Chair Cathy Judd-Stein Delivers Oral Testimony to the Joint Committee on Economic Development and Emerging Technologies During Sports Wagering Public Hearing on June 17, 2021

Thank you Chair Lesser and Chair Parisella and all of the Committee for encouraging the MGC to appear today.

I am joined by my colleague, Commissioner Gayle Cameron, and our executive director, Karen Wells, along with several members of our MGC team.

We recognize that certain pending legislative proposals to legalize sports betting in the Commonwealth contemplate a regulatory role for the Gaming Commission. We also know that there are many decisions to be made ahead and we make no presumptions as to the future. However, we have followed the developments relating to sports betting and while the Commission as a public body has not adopted formal policy positions on the subject matter – safeguarding neutrality, our staff has been preparing to assume any regulatory responsibility that may be assigned and has been pleased to assist the Legislature as questions arise and will continue to serve in any way that may be helpful.

We are very fortunate as a gaming commission to be the beneficiary of the Expanded Gaming Act, which sets clear priorities.

The Legislature legalized casino gaming in 2011 to produce broad-based economic development, including jobs and revenue. To date, casino licensees have invested approximately \$3.8 billion in capital infrastructure and tax revenue has generated nearly \$800 million. The gaming licensees spend millions annually on local small businesses and have created thousands of construction and operational jobs for Massachusetts residents while prioritizing diversity and inclusion – all as this Legislature envisioned.

As noted, the Commission has appropriately safeguarded neutrality on sports wagering policy but recognizes that legal, regulated sports betting provides the Legislature with an opportunity to minimize the illegal market, provide consumer protections, generate tax income, repatriate dollars from nearby states, and establish robust responsible gaming and problem gambling strategies.

I can attest, on behalf of my fellow Commissioners, that as we fulfill our current responsibilities and mission, we are guided every day by what this Legislature set forth as its paramount objective when it passed the Expanded Gaming Act: that is, to ensure public



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confidence in the integrity of the gaming licensing process and in the strict oversight of all gaming establishments through a rigorous regulatory scheme.

Should our regulatory responsibilities expand, we pledge to adhere to that same commitment and uphold the integrity of legal sports wagering, while protecting against predatory practices and other harms that put at risk the well-being of betting patrons and athletes.

With that, I thank you for your time and now, with your permission, would like to turn to Executive Director Karen Wells, who will make preliminary remarks and, with the benefit of our entire team, answer questions that you may have.



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