

General Law Committee JOINT FAVORABLE REPORT

Bill No.: HB-5272

Title: AN ACT PROHIBITING CERTAIN GAMING-RELATED ADVERTISING,
MARKETING AND PROMOTIONAL ACTIVITIES.

Vote Date: 3/21/2025

Vote Action: Joint Favorable

PH Date: 3/12/2025

File No.:

***Disclaimer:** The following JOINT FAVORABLE Report is prepared for the benefit of the members of the General Assembly, solely for purposes of information, summarization and explanation and does not represent the intent of the General Assembly or either chamber thereof for any purpose.*

SPONSORS OF BILL:

Rep. David Rutigliano, 123rd District
Rep. Craig Fishbein, 90th District

REASONS FOR BILL:

This bill intends to address an increase in problem gambling by restricting gambling operators from offering bonuses or credits meant to entice individuals to either engage in or continue gambling. The language is designed to protect individuals from either developing or perpetuating problem gambling behavior.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:

None expressed.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:

Diana Goode, Executive Director, CT Council on Problem Gambling, Supports:

Diana Goode understands the necessity for gambling promoters to market to consumers; however, she fears that these types of advertisements "disproportionately affect" those who are at risk of developing or worsening their problem gambling behavior.

NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:

Jody Cummings, General Counsel, Mashantucket Pequot Tribe, Opposes:

Jody Cummings is testifying in opposition to the proposed legislation on behalf of the Mashantucket Pequot Tribal Nation. They assert that some of the provisions in the legislation, as it is currently written, would severely undermine the policy benefits of the legalization of online gambling and encourage the spread of illegal gambling operations. They argue that financial bonuses to players are commonly used in the industry, and without them legal

marketers may be unable to compete with illegal operations. Furthermore, they argue that these regulations are unnecessary because these industries are already heavily regulated.

Brandt Iden, Vice President of Government Affairs, Fanatics, Opposes:

Brandt Iden is testifying on behalf of Fanatics in opposition to the proposed legislation. Fanatics believes removing the types of incentives HB 5272 seeks to prohibit would "negatively impact state revenues." Fanatics believes that without these incentives, customers would seek to play in other jurisdictions or in illegal markets, thus impacting state revenue.

David Prestwood, Government Affairs Manager, Draft Kings, Opposes:

David Prestwood is representing Draft Kings, which is opposed to the proposed legislation. Draft Kings notes that they already work with the necessary agencies to ensure their advertising is responsible. Instead, this bill would make it more difficult for legal gambling operations to compete with the illegal ones, which would still offer these bonus credits.

Richard Roberts, President, Mohegan Digital, Opposes:

Richard Roberts emphasizes the importance of promotional credits, considering them a valuable tool to make the online gambling experience more engaging for consumers. If this bill were to pass, these types of incentives would be banned. In contrast, offshore illegal operators would not be tethered to the same restrictions, making it more difficult for legal operators to compete with illegal enterprises.

Frank Suarez, President & CEO, Connecticut Lottery, Opposes:

Frank Suarez is testifying on behalf of the Connecticut Lottery Corporation (CLC) in opposition to the proposed legislation. CLC argues the promotions offered are "pivotal" to increasing awareness of new products and expanding CLC's customer base. CLC notes they agree with the goal of protecting consumers; however, they argue that advertising is necessary to provide their consumers with the experience they are expecting.

Michael Ventre, State and Government Relations Senior Manager, FanDuel, Opposes:

Michael Ventre argues that promotional credits are embedded into the digital gaming ecosystem and consumers have come to expect them. If these types of incentives are removed, Ventre fears that customers will redirect themselves to illegal operators that still offer these benefits. Ventre notes incidents of copycat vendors impersonating Mohegan to emphasize the prevalence of this threat.

Reported by: Derrick Arnold, Assistant Clerk

Date: 3/25/2025