

Joseph Tyrrell
Las Vegas
LD 1164

132ND MAINE LEGISLATURE, FIRST SPECIAL SESSION, VETERANS AND
LEGAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE HEARING ON HP 769, LD 1164

March 31, 2025

Good morning Chairman Hickman and Chairwoman Supica and fellow Committee members of the VLA. My name is Joseph Tyrrell and I serve as Caesars Entertainment's Vice President for Government Relations in the northeast region.

In 2023, Caesars Sportsbook launched online sports betting in Maine through Caesars' historic partnership with three of the Wabanaki Nations: the Houlton Band of Maliseet Indians, the Mi'kmaq Nation and the Penobscot Nation, furthering Caesars Entertainment's longtime commitment to supporting Indian gaming. During the launch we also donated to the Lewiston-Auburn Area Response Fund established by the Maine Community Foundation to help with the tragic events in October 2023. Our hearts continue to be with the families impacted.

Caesars is one of the most trusted brands in casino gaming and currently operates iGaming in five North American jurisdictions, helping to generate significant tax revenues in these markets. Caesars is a longtime industry leader in responsible gaming and responsible gaming education. The Company enforces an enhanced 21+ gaming policy that ensures Caesars products are only available to individuals 21 and older, including Maine.

Today we stand united with the Wabanaki Nations in support of LD 1164. This legislation is a responsible path to create economic opportunity for Maine's federally recognized tribal nations through a strong state regulatory framework under the Gambling Control Unit.

A well-regulated internet gaming market will provide new revenues for Maine and the Wabanaki Nations. In order to compete with widespread illegal operators and maximize revenues, it is important that the bill be amended to permit a full menu of internet casino games, including slots and table games, in line with all of the other U.S. states that have legalized Internet Gaming. We support the iGaming tax rate of 16% as currently written in the bill, which we estimate could generate about \$35 million in tax revenue to the state of Maine in the first year after launching iGaming and growing to more than \$75 million annually. You should demand a leading iGaming experience, which requires significant technology and infrastructure investments by the operators. A reasonable tax rate ensures Maine iGaming patrons will have a demonstrably better experience than illegal and proliferating gray market operators.

Thank you for permitting me to testify today - I am happy to answer any questions you may have.