

Testimony of Matthew Gallagher, General Manager, Oxford Casino & Hotel

In Opposition to

**LD 1164, An Act to Create Economic Opportunity for the Wabanaki Nations Through
Internet Gaming**

Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs

March 31, 2024

Senator Hickman, Representative Supica, and Members of the Committee, my name is Matt Gallagher, and I am General Manager of Oxford Casino Hotel. I testify today in opposition to LD 1164, which represents the largest expansion of gaming in Maine's history, putting a casino in every Mainer's pocket.

Oxford Casino opened in 2012 and has grown significantly, investing millions in our facility, including a hotel, expanded gaming floor, and new dining options. Today, we operate 967 slot machines, 23 table games, and employ over 360 Mainers—most with full benefits. In 2024 alone, Oxford Casino contributed over \$41 million in taxes, including nearly \$23 million for K-12 education.

This bill would create an internet gaming monopoly for the Wabanaki Nations, with little economic benefit to Maine. Currently, only seven states offer iGaming, and we've seen the consequences: lost brick-and-mortar jobs, revenue declines for local communities, and fewer economic investments. This bill would do the same to Maine.

Oxford Casino has been a vital economic engine, revitalizing our region, lowering unemployment, and generating over \$700,000 in additional sales, hotel, and other local taxes. However, iGaming threatens this progress by diverting revenue away from our community-based businesses and shifting profits out of state. Unlike a casino, an online gaming platform does not create good-paying jobs or spur local development.

Moreover, Maine's current gaming laws provide stability, allowing us to compete with Massachusetts and New Hampshire. Mainers have repeatedly rejected gaming expansion, and polls show overwhelming support for requiring a statewide vote before any new casino—whether online or brick-and-mortar—is authorized. The Legislature should respect the will of the people.

Oxford Casino has delivered on its promise to Maine—creating jobs, paying taxes, and supporting local businesses. LD 1164 undermines this success. I urge you to reject this harmful expansion and preserve Maine's economic stability. Thank you for your time.

