



Joseph Baldacci
Senator, District 9

THE MAINE SENATE
132nd Legislature

3 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333

Testimony of Sen. Joe Baldacci presenting

LD 1862, "An Act to Provide That Authority over in person Sports Betting Resides Solely with the Gambling Control Board,"

Before the Joint Standing committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs

May 7, 2025

Good afternoon Senator Hickman, Representative Supica, and esteemed members of the Joint Standing committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs. My name is Joe Baldacci, and I represent Senate District 9, which includes Bangor and Hermon. Am pleased today to introduce LD 1862, **"An Act to Provide That Authority over in person Sports Betting Resides Solely with the Gambling Control Board,"**

This bill is about transparency & accountability, which does not exist in the statute as it sits today. Specifically, when the bill was passed, I and other legislators were promised that in-person sports betting was available to the bricks + mortar establishments. That was what is called an illusory promise.

The manner in which the process, if you will, has proceeded has effectively made it impossible for existing bricks and mortar establishments. All authority, without any real oversight, is located in one person. Yet we have a Gambling Control Commission appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Senate, which has been completely excluded in the statute. From my

conversation with the Governor's Office, they were very unaware of that detail.

But it is not a small detail — it is a detail that has effectively denied Bangor and Oxford from being able to actually get a license for in-person sports betting. It is time for this Committee to fix the mistakes made by others.

I am not asking to change the regulatory structure for online sports betting. What I am asking for is that the Gambling Control Board — the Board set up by the legislature — be given the authority to do its job of review, oversight, accountability in doing the people's business and giving Bangor and Oxford a fair shot.

I am not laying odds on this, but I am hopeful that this Committee, Republican and Democratic, can and will be fair to Bangor and Oxford, which is what we were entitled to 3 years ago to have.



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The amendments I see necessary are:

- Title 8, Chapter 35 § 1202 – adding a definition of “Board” to mean “the Gambling Control Board established under Title 8, Chapter 31, section 1002.”
- Title 8, Chapter 35 § 1203(1)(A) - In administering and enforcing this chapter, the director:
 - A. Has the power to regulate the conduct of sports wagering except facility sports wagering, which falls under the exclusive regulatory authority of the Board. The Board retains the same powers and duties of the director as set forth in this chapter to administer and enforce this chapter with respect to facility sports wagering and all related suppliers, management services providers, and employees of a facility sports wagering licensee. All subsequent references to “director” in this chapter apply to mobile sports wagering only.
- *Will need to change every reference to “director” to “director or the Board”*
- Title 8, Chapter 35 § 1203(3) – Authority to conduct sports wagering; management services permitted. A facility sports wagering license granted by the ~~director~~ Board pursuant to this section grants a licensee lawful authority to conduct sports wagering in which wagers are placed within a physical location controlled by the licensee at a commercial track, casino, or off-track betting facility as defined in subsection 2(A-C) at the licensee’s principal place of business in the State within the terms and conditions of the license and any rules adopted under this chapter. A facility sports wagering licensee may contract with a management services licensee under section 1209.
- Title 8, Chapter 31 § 1003 – adding Subsection 1(M) to read, “Regulate, supervise and exercise general control over the operation of retail sports wagering in the State.”

I would think you might then want to move the entire sports wagering section until a new Subchapter 8 of Title 8, Chapter 31. That’s what the legislature did when it put the power of advanced deposit wagering (online horse betting) to the Board by creating a new Subchapter 7.