

Miles Theeman
Bangor
LD 1902

To: Sen. Hickman, Rep. Supica,
and Honorable Members of the Veterans and Legal Affairs Committee,

My name is Miles Unobsky Theeman, and I am submitting this written testimony in opposition to LD 1902. I have spent many years advocating for responsible economic development in Bangor, including playing an instrumental role in the “Arena Yes!” campaign that helped bring about what is now the Cross Insurance Center, and later serving on the Friends of the Cross Center to ensure its continued success.

I fully appreciate and support the goal of helping nonprofit organizations — especially those serving veterans. However, the mechanism proposed in LD 1902 raises significant concerns related to taxation, regulatory oversight, and fairness within Maine’s gaming policy.

First, LD 1902 authorizes a new category of electronic gaming machines, yet it does so without presenting a clear or comparable tax structure for the proceeds generated by those devices. By contrast, Maine’s existing casinos have invested hundreds of millions of dollars into our state and operate within defined regulatory and tax frameworks that support statewide priorities, including debt service on the Cross Insurance Center in Bangor. Introducing additional electronic gaming without clarity on how those revenues would be treated creates an uneven and uncertain environment.

Second, the bill provides no defined regulatory guardrails for these electronic machines, despite their functional similarity to slot-style gaming in how they engage players and generate revenue. Oversight exists not simply to restrict gaming, but to protect consumers, ensure integrity, and maintain public confidence. Expanding electronic gaming without clear oversight is not consistent with the thoughtful approach Maine has taken in the past.

Finally, legislation should not penalize or undercut those who have invested significantly in our state. Hollywood Casino in Bangor and Oxford Casino in western Maine have not only built facilities and created jobs, but they pay substantial taxes, contribute to local and state programs, and support their surrounding communities. They have operated in good faith within a model created by the Legislature and Maine voters. Policies that introduce untaxed or lightly regulated competitors threaten that model and, by extension, the communities that depend on it.

In Bangor’s case, the consequences would be especially acute. Success of the Cross Insurance Center — a facility representing a major public-private investment — depends on the continued viability of the casino as an economic anchor. The bill before you places that progress at risk.

Supporting nonprofits and honoring our veterans is a shared, non-partisan priority. But we can and should do so without destabilizing existing investments, risking jobs, weakening revenue streams, and undermining responsible regulation.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to oppose LD 1902.

Thank you for your consideration.