



Joint Subcommittee to Study the Feasibility of Establishing the Virginia Gaming Commission

August 19, 2025, at 10:00 a.m.

General Assembly Building, Senate Room C

<https://studies.viriniageneralassembly.gov/studies/667>

The Joint Subcommittee to Study the Feasibility of Establishing the Virginia Gaming Commission (the Joint Subcommittee) met in Richmond with Senator Bryce E. Reeves, chair, presiding.¹ The meeting began with opening remarks from the chair and vice-chair, Delegate Paul E. Krizek, followed by presentations and discussion. Materials presented at the meeting are accessible through the [*Joint Subcommittee's meetings webpage*](#).

Adoption of Virtual Meeting Policy

Delegate Krizek moved, and Senator Reeves seconded, to adopt a virtual meeting policy that is identical to the policy adopted by the Joint Subcommittee in 2024. The Joint Subcommittee unanimously voted to again adopt the policy.

Overview of HB 2171 (Simon, 2025)

Delegate Marcus B. Simon

Delegate Simon explained the provisions of his bill, [*HB 2171*](#), which would have authorized Internet gaming in the Commonwealth to be regulated by the Virginia Lottery Board (the Board). The bill's cognate, [*SB 827*](#) (Locke, 2025), was referred to the Joint Subcommittee by the Senate Committee on General Laws and Technology for further study. The bills, neither of which passed, permitted the Board to issue an Internet gaming operator license to a casino gaming operator that submits an application on forms approved by the Board, meets certain qualifications, and pays an application fee of \$1 million. The bills also set the tax rate at 15 percent of an Internet gaming operator's adjusted gross Internet gaming revenue with 2.5 percent of the tax revenues allocated to the Problem Gambling Treatment and Support Fund and the remaining 97.5 percent allocated to the general fund.

Delegate Simon provided background information on Internet gaming, also known as iGaming or iGambling, and noted that eight states have legalized iGaming, allowing about 14 percent of the U.S. adult population access to it. He explained that, in 2023, the legal iGaming market generated \$5.6 billion in gross gaming revenue and highlighted that Virginia could generate an additional \$5.3 billion in new taxable revenue over a five-year period from iGaming.

¹ **Members Present:** Senator Bryce E. Reeves (chair), Delegate Paul E. Krizek (vice-chair), Senator Adam P. Ebbin, Senator Jeremy S. McPike, Delegate Terry L. Austin, Delegate David L. Bulova
Members Absent: Senator Todd E. Pillion, Delegate Luke E. Torian

Presentation: Pros and Cons of iGaming and Problem Gambling Update

Keith Whyte, Founder and President, Safer Gambling Strategies, LLC

Mr. Whyte addressed the pros and cons of legalizing iGaming in Virginia, noting that a pro would be moving players out of the illegal online gaming market and a con would be that research shows that there is a higher risk of gambling problems in iGaming. He provided the following recommendations related to iGaming for a potential Virginia Gaming Commission (VGC): (i) adopt the National Council on Problem Gambling's Internet Responsible Gambling Standards as a baseline requirement for all online gambling, (ii) include all forms of online gambling in the VGC mandate, and (iii) appoint a VGC Director of Responsible Gambling.

Mr. Whyte also provided an update on problem gambling services in the Commonwealth, noting that between 2019 and 2024, total calls to the problem gambling helpline increased by 1,500 percent and intakes (actual calls for help) increased by 223 percent. He provided the following recommendations related to problem gambling services for a potential VGC: (a) allocate VGC funds to research problem gambling and responsible gambling, (b) hold other state agencies accountable to gaming laws, and (c) include VGC representatives on the Problem Gambling Advisory Task Force.

Presentation: Challenges and Successes of iGaming Oversight in New Jersey

Dave Rebuck, Past Director, New Jersey Division of Gaming Enforcement

Mr. Rebuck provided testimony on his experience as the Director of New Jersey's Division of Gaming Enforcement, including what worked for successful iGaming oversight in New Jersey and what changes were found to be necessary, and he provided suggestions about what Virginia could learn from New Jersey as the Joint Subcommittee considers if and how to establish a VGC.

Presentation: Illicit iGaming Operations in Virginia and Its Impact on Other Forms of Gaming

Michelle MacGregor, Senior Policy Advisor, Sports Betting Alliance

Ms. MacGregor presented information on various aspects of iGaming, including the growth of the iGaming market and consumer sentiment, legal iGaming performance and the forecast for Virginia, insights into consumer behavior in states with both legalized iGaming and brick-and-mortar casinos, and consumer protections in the regulated iGaming market. She highlighted that legalizing iGaming in Virginia could generate an estimated \$5.3 billion in new taxable revenue over the first five years and that millions of dollars could be generated immediately from operator licensing fees.

Presentation: The Public Health Concerns of iGambling — Understanding the Social and Economic Impacts

Brianne Doura-Schawohl, Founder and Chief Executive Officer of Doura-Schawohl Consulting, LLC

Ms. Doura-Schawohl discussed the public health concerns of iGambling. She noted that the national annual social cost of problem gambling is \$14 billion, that the National Council on Problem Gambling estimates 9 million American adults suffer from gambling addiction, and that there are currently no federal funds designated for problem gambling treatment or research, unlike the billions in funding designated to help treat and research alcohol, tobacco, and drug



addiction. She also provided statistics on the problem gambling infrastructure in Virginia as well as statistics on problem gambling in New Jersey, Connecticut, and Pennsylvania.

Presentation: Comprehensive Look at iGaming

Dr. Brian Wyman, President and Chief Executive Officer, The Innovation Group

Dr. Wyman presented on iGaming's impacts on land-based gaming and its broader economic impacts and discussed responsible gaming. He noted that a recent study showed that iGaming reduces land-based gaming revenues by approximately 15 to 16 percent and said that the broader economic impacts related to legalized iGaming include reduced casino revenue as a result of reduced gaming tax, reduced casino spending on supplies with local vendors, reduced capital investment in casino property, and reduced visitation to casinos.

Dr. Wyman also noted the risk factors associated with iGaming, such as 24/7 access, the speed and intensity of iGaming, and the financial consequences of problem gaming, and presented key risk statistics related to online gaming.

Next Meeting

The next meeting of the Joint Subcommittee was not scheduled.

For more information, see the [*Joint Subcommittee's website*](#) or contact the Division of Legislative Services staff:

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