

# SENATE BILL 565

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By: **Senator Watson**

Introduced and read first time: January 25, 2024

Assigned to: Budget and Taxation

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Expansion of Commercial Gaming – Internet Gaming Referendum**

3 FOR the purpose of providing that the General Assembly may authorize, by law, the State  
4 Lottery and Gaming Control Commission to issue certain Internet gaming licenses;  
5 requiring certain implementation legislation to include certain criteria and  
6 specifications; declaring the intent of the General Assembly that certain revenues be  
7 used for the funding of public education; submitting this Act to a referendum of the  
8 qualified voters of the State; and generally relating to Internet gaming.

9 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,  
10 That:

11 (a) Subject to subsection (b) of this section, the General Assembly may authorize,  
12 by law, the State Lottery and Gaming Control Commission to issue a license to offer  
13 Internet gaming in the State.

14 (b) Legislation enacted by the General Assembly to implement the provisions of  
15 this Act shall include the criteria for eligible applications for a licensee and specifications  
16 of the permissible forms and means of conduct of Internet gaming.

17 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That, if the voters of this State  
18 adopt a referendum that authorizes Internet gaming in the State, the State's share of  
19 revenues generated by Internet gaming shall primarily be used for the funding of public  
20 education.

21 SECTION 3. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That the provisions of Section 1 of  
22 this Act, which authorize the General Assembly to authorize, by law, the State Lottery and  
23 Gaming Control Commission to issue Internet gaming licenses to certain licensees in the  
24 State, are subject to a referendum of the qualified voters of the State as provided in Section  
25 4 of this Act, and on voter approval of this Act at the general election to be held in November  
26 2024, legislation shall be required to provide for the operation, regulation, and disposition

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EXPLANATION: CAPITALS INDICATE MATTER ADDED TO EXISTING LAW.

[Brackets] indicate matter deleted from existing law.



1 of proceeds of Internet gaming in the State.

2 SECTION 4. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That:

3 (a) In accordance with Article XIX, § 1(e) of the Maryland Constitution, before  
4 Section 1 of this Act, which authorizes additional forms or expansion of commercial gaming,  
5 becomes effective, a question substantially similar to the following shall be submitted to a  
6 referendum of the qualified voters of the State at the general election to be held in  
7 November 2024:

8 “Do you favor the expansion of commercial gaming in the State of Maryland to  
9 authorize Internet gaming for the primary purpose of raising revenue for education?”

10 (b) The State Board of Elections shall do those things necessary and proper to  
11 provide for and hold the referendum required by this section. If a majority of votes cast on  
12 the question are “For the referred law”, this Act shall become effective on the 30th day  
13 following the official canvass of voters for the referendum, but if a majority of the votes cast  
14 on the question are “Against the referred law”, this Act, with no further action required by  
15 the General Assembly, shall be null and void.

16 SECTION 5. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That, subject to the provisions of  
17 Section 4 of this Act and for the sole purpose of providing for the referendum required by  
18 Section 4 of this Act, this Act shall take effect July 1, 2024.