



State of Rhode Island

DIVISION OF STATE POLICE

State Police Headquarters, 311 Danielson Pike, North Scituate, Rhode Island 02857
OFFICE OF THE SUPERINTENDENT AND DIRECTOR OF PUBLIC SAFETY

Colonel Darnell S. Weaver
Superintendent

March 24, 2025

The Honorable Robert E. Craven, Sr., Chair
House Committee on Judiciary
Rhode Island House of Representatives
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

RE: 2025-H 5656– An Act Relating to Criminal Offenses – Gambling and Lotteries

Dear Chairman Craven:

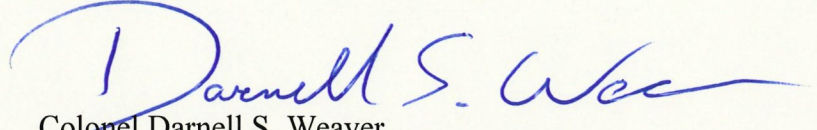
On behalf of the Rhode Island State Police, please accept this letter expressing strong concerns regarding legislation currently before the House Committee on Judiciary entitled, “Gambling and Lotteries,” which would allow social gaming at certain locations where gambling is incidental to a bona fide social relationship and only players of the game would receive anything of value.

Under the proposed legislation, a person could host a social game so long as they do not derive a profit, and there are no professionals involved. Private businesses, private clubs and private associations could allow for social gaming so long as no profit is derived. This would also extend to allowing office pools. Additionally, if the entity has a liquor license, they must get authority from the Department of Business Regulation. If a non-profit organization wants to hold an office pool, they must get authority from the Rhode Island State Police.

Respectfully, the proposed legislation lacks reasonable oversight and control measures to minimize the risk for potential abuse. Gambling or lotteries as defined in the proposed legislation should be prohibited unless it is regulated in a consistent manner as other forms of legalized gambling in this state. Because mechanisms for oversight are limited, I believe that the proposed legislation will have many unanticipated consequences such as increased criminal activity and abuse. For these reasons, I must express my strong concerns regarding the proposed legislation.

I thank you for the opportunity to express the position of the Rhode Island State Police on legislation currently before the House Committee on Judiciary, H –5656 entitled, “An Act Relating to Criminal Offenses – Gambling and Lotteries.”

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Darnell S. Weaver". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Darnell" being the most prominent part.

Colonel Darnell S. Weaver
Superintendent, Rhode Island State Police
Director of Public Safety

cc: House Committee on Judiciary Members
Nicole McCarty, Chief Legal Counsel to the Speaker of the House
Major Ronald Longolucco
Adam Sholes, Esq. – DPS Chief Legal Counsel
Governor's Office