

April 12, 2021

The Honorable Denny Hoskins  
Missouri Senate  
201 W Capitol Ave., Rm. 423  
Jefferson City, Missouri 65101

Dear Senator Hoskins:

On behalf of iDEA Growth, I am writing to thank you for your leadership in advancing legislation that would allow for legal, licensed and regulated sports betting in Missouri. If enacted, such legislation would provide Missourians with the opportunity to bet in a safe, well-regulated environment that creates revenue for the state and jobs for its citizens.

By way of introduction, iDEA Growth was founded to advocate for responsible internet gaming policies that will spur economic growth and protect consumers. Our membership -- 30 companies and growing -- represents every segment of this emerging industry and has vast experience operating in state-regulated jurisdictions across the United States. iDEA Growth is uniquely positioned to provide a 360- degree perspective into every mobile sports betting and internet gaming policy issue.

In the three years since the U.S. Supreme Court struck down the Professional and Amateur Sports Protection Act (PASPA) twenty-one states have licensed and regulated sports betting within their borders, and five others have enacted legislation to do so and are awaiting final regulations.

Of the eight states that border Missouri, four (Illinois, Iowa, Arkansas and Tennessee) already have legal sports betting and sports betting legislation is being considered in Kansas, Kentucky and Nebraska. There can be little doubt that Missourians who live near the state's borders are crossing into adjoining states where sports betting is legal to bet at retail sports betting locations, or from their mobile devices. This practice creates revenue for the governments of those states, but not for Missouri.

Other residents of the Show-Me State doubtless participate in the large, illegal underground market of offshore websites and organized crime. Unlike a legal, regulated market, the illegal and offshore market does not offer protections against problem gambling; it does not seek to prevent minors from playing, and it does not protect against money laundering. One major impetus for states' legalization of sports betting has been to remove their citizens from this shadowy and predatory industry.

We believe that all of the arguments in favor of legalization of sports betting are equally true for iGaming. While we are aware that iGaming is not part of the current discussion in the Senate, we hope the legislature will consider it in the future. Like sports betting legalization, iGaming would also provide an opportunity to raise revenue for the state while replacing an illegal offshore industry with a licensed, regulated industry that protects consumers and creates jobs. When the time is appropriate, we would welcome the opportunity to discuss why we believe it is critical for Missouri to embrace iGaming.

We do believe the time is ripe for Missouri to create a safe, legal, regulated sports betting market for its citizens, creating revenue for the state and jobs within its borders. We thank you for your leadership in seeking to do so, and we stand ready to help this effort in any way we can.

Sincerely,



Jeff Ifrah

Cc: Members of the Missouri Senate