

February 2, 2021

Senator Cecil Thomas
Senate Building
1 Capitol Square
2nd Floor
Columbus, OH 43215

Dear Senator Thomas:

Congratulations on being chosen to serve on the newly-formed Senate Select Committee on Gaming. iDEA Growth looks forward to being a resource to you and your colleagues as this committee examines important issues surrounding the future of Ohio's gaming economy.

By way of background, iDEA Growth was founded to advocate for responsible internet gaming policies that will spur economic growth and protect consumers. Our membership -- 28 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 this committee will consider.

While the Committee will likely examine a broad array of gaming issues, iDEA Growth would like to share some key points related to internet betting.

It's Already Happening in Ohio

Unregulated internet sports betting and other forms of internet gaming already exist in Ohio. These illegal operators provide little in the way of consumer protections, have a deleterious impact on the state's legal casino industry, and deprive Ohio from needed tax revenues.

Regulation is about corralling this illegal market and turning it into an Ohio-based industry that is accountable to regulators and consumers.

Protect Consumers

Regulated internet gaming and sports betting platforms use technology to ensure the highest degree of integrity and protection for consumers. These include:

- Robust age and identify verification
- Flagging problem-gambling in real time
- Anti-fraud and AML compliance
- Precise geolocation
- Secure payments
- Cybersecurity + Anti-Hacking
- Customer data security

A legal, transparent industry that is accountable to regulators is the best way to mitigate problem gambling and promote responsible gaming measures. Please read iDEA Growth's [Responsible Gaming Pillars](#) to learn how the industry addresses this important issue.

Competition is Critical

The most successful regulatory programs are those that cultivate a market that is as open and competitive as possible, subject to appropriate gaming regulation.

Our members' experience in New Jersey and around the world has shown that competition is vital to developing a thriving industry that maximizes customer engagement and tax revenue. We look forward to sharing data on how a competitive market will benefit consumers, the state, and Ohio's land-based gaming industry.

Regulatory Framework

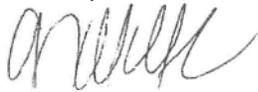
Policymakers should establish a system that can effectively channel consumers away from the illegal offshore market to Ohio's regulated industry. Creating a regulatory framework that allows Ohio's licensed industry to compete with – and draw customers away from – the illegal market will be essential to protecting consumers and maximizing tax revenue for the state.

We urge a continued commitment to low tax rates, reasonable licensing fees, and to not mandating additional costs which make it even harder for the legal business to compete with illegal operators.

Finally, regulators should be given discretion and flexibility to approve new innovations – from types of games, wagers, and payment options – to keep up with consumer interests and demands.

iDEA Growth appreciates the opportunity to be a resource to the Senate Select Committee on Gaming. We are eager to work with all Ohio lawmakers and stakeholders to establish a robust and competitive industry that sparks economic growth, investment, and tax revenues for the state.

Sincerely,



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