

**May 17, 2019**

**Volume 25, Issue 14**

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A publication of  
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# The \_\_\_\_\_ MICHIGAN GAMING \_\_\_\_\_ Newsletter



## **NATIONAL SPORTS WAGERING UPDATE**

Within the past 10 days, three additional states have joined the growing number of states legalizing sports wagering, with a fourth poised to join them before the end of the month. Governors in Iowa, Indiana and Montana each signed legislation legalizing sports wagering in their respective states. Legislation in Tennessee passed the legislature and was presented to the governor on May 14, 2019. Tennessee governor Bill Lee has signaled that he will not sign the legislation but will not veto it either. Under Tennessee law, a bill becomes law ten days after it is presented to the governor (Sundays excepted) if the bill is not signed. Tennessee's law would therefore become effective May 25, 2019 if no further action is taken.

The recent action takes the number of states who have legalized sports betting to 13, with 8 of those states having already implemented regulated sports betting (Nevada, Delaware, New Jersey, Mississippi, West Virginia, Pennsylvania, New Mexico and Rhode Island). Arkansas, New York, Oregon, Indiana and Iowa all are in the process of establishing regulations that would allow the roll-out of sports betting, along with Washington D.C..

A number of other states are moving towards legalization. Colorado's legislature approved a sports wagering bill on May 3, 2019. It would need to be signed by the Governor and then the issue of sports wagering would advance to a statewide initiative on the November 2019 ballot. Louisiana and North Carolina have each passed legislation in their respective Senates but not their respective Houses. Numerous other states have introduced legislation that is working its way through the process and could result in additional states authorizing sports wagering in 2019.

## **CAESARS WINDSOR CELEBRATES 25 YEARS OF CASINO GAMBLING IN THE REGION**

This past week marked the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the opening of Casino Windsor,

now Caesars Windsor on the Detroit River in Canada right across from the City of Detroit. “Since opening, we’ve been the number one tourist destination in our market,” Kevin Laforet, President of Caesars Windsor told the *Windsor Star*. He further said that the casino welcomes 3.5 million guests per year at the facility. In connection with the celebration of the anniversary, Caesars Windsor [released a video on Twitter](#).

The City of Windsor joined in the celebration of the event by releasing a [video](#) thanking the Ontario Lottery and Gaming Commission for supporting the community. Drew Dilkins, Mayor of the City of Windsor said the following:

“Being the host city of Caesars Windsor and sharing the bond of partnership, friendship, and support with OLG has had a lasting impact on the Windsor-Essex Community. . . . OLG’s investments have helped to make our City one of Ontario’s best.”

Casino Windsor was the first casino to open in the Detroit/Windsor region on May 14, 1994. Its opening triggered further interest on the part of residents of the state of Michigan for casino offerings within the City of Detroit. During the campaign for a voter referendum to approve commercial casino gambling in Detroit, a key television ad showed former Detroit Mayor Dennis Archer standing by the riverfront showing the constant flow of gaming customers crossing the Ambassador Bridge to go to the Windsor Casino. Ultimately, the voters passed a referendum in 1996 authorizing the three casinos located in the City of Detroit.

## **U.S. REPRESENTATIVES REQUEST TAX REPORTING STANDARD REVISIONS**

On May 13, 2019, Dana Titus (D-NV) and Darin LaHood (R-IL) sent a bipartisan request to the Department of Treasury requesting that the Treasury increase the reporting threshold for slot

and bingo winnings. The letter, which can be read in its entirety [here](#), notes that the \$1,200 reporting threshold was established in 1977 and has not been updated since. Reps Titus and LaHood note that with inflation, the actual value has decreased significantly and that the reporting (required on Form W-2G) imposes a significant regulatory burden on the gaming industry. They propose increasing the threshold to \$5,000.

As a practical matter, whenever a slot machine hits on a jackpot of \$1,200 or above, the machine locks and a casino employee must visit the machine, collect information from the player, and issue a W-2G. The representatives urged Treasury to reconsider the regulations as it would both reduce the paperwork burden on gaming operators and improve the player experience. The letter cites a deadline of June 10 for a response from Treasury indicating whether Treasury will utilize its administrative regulatory authority to raise the limit or the representatives suggest they intend to propose legislation that will enact the change.

The American Gaming Association applauded the action. “Casinos are the only businesses that must take their assets out of production to comply with their tax information reporting obligations. The current federal regulations on reporting slot machine winnings have been outdated for decades, creating inefficiencies, paperwork and unnecessary hurdles,” said Bill Miller, president and chief executive officer of the American Gaming Association. “The gaming industry strongly supports the efforts of Reps. Titus and LaHood to update the antiquated threshold for reporting slot machine winnings while relieving associated burdens for casinos, their patrons and the IRS alike.”

## **AMERICAN GAMING ASSOCIATION RELEASES SPORTS BETTING SELF - REGULATION**

In a press release issued May 14, 2019, the American Gaming Association (“AGA”) released a new set of self-regulations for advertising and

marketing of legal sports betting. The release was timed to coincide with the one-year anniversary of the Supreme Court striking down the Professional and Amateur Sports Protection Act (“PASPSA”) and involved regulations developed in coordination with the AGA’s members. The new code, “Responsible Marketing Code for Sports Wagering” imposes marketing restrictions on certain target audiences and also requires inclusion of responsible gaming materials and ties in to the AGA’s previous release of the Responsible Gaming Code of Conduct to which numerous companies voluntarily committed.

"For several years, the gaming industry has been committed to driving the illegal market out of business for the benefit of consumers, state and local economies and the integrity of both games and bets," said Bill Miller, president and chief executive officer of the American Gaming Association. "The gaming industry has an obligation to extend our decades-long commitment to responsibility to this growing sector, and that's exactly what this effort codifies. We are setting a high bar for sports betting advertising and will continue to ensure that everyone involved in the expansion of legalized sports betting across the country – gaming operators, sports leagues and teams, broadcasters and other businesses – rise to this standard."

## **REMINDER AND ATTACHED AGENDA: MGCB PUBLIC MEETING SCHEDULED FOR TUESDAY, MAY 21**

The Michigan Gaming Control Board will hold a regular public meeting on Tuesday, May 21, 2019. The meeting will begin at 9:30 a.m. with the staff briefing, followed immediately by the regular agenda items. Please [click here to see the agenda](#) for the May meeting.

The meeting is open to the public and questions, comments and suggestions from the public regarding Board business and the licensing regulation and conduct of casino gaming in Detroit under the Act are welcomed and

encouraged during the public comment portion of the meeting.

The meeting will be located at the MGCB Detroit office, Cadillac Place, 3062 West Grand Blvd., Suite L-700, Detroit. The Cadillac Place is in Detroit's New Center Area near the John Lodge Freeway (M-10), between Second Avenue and Cass Avenue. The Fisher Building and the Albert Kahn Building are nearby landmarks.

## **ISLAND RESORT AND CASINO WINS TOP MAGAZINE AWARDS**

Per a press release dated May 15, The Island Resort & Casino, located in Harris, Michigan, has been honored with numerous awards from casino industry magazines. Island has won nine “Best of Dining & Nightlife” Awards from the readers of Casino Player Magazine for the Midwest Region, and eight “Readers’ Choice Awards” from Midwest Gaming and Destinations. The Island’s outstanding focus on customer satisfaction earned the Island team an award for “Best Overall Service” in Casino Player Magazine.

“It’s very gratifying to be recognized by the readers of these well-known publications,” said Tony Mancilla, Island Resort & Casino’s General Manager. “The Island Resort & Casino is truly a total resort experience and we are gratified by the support of our Midwest guests.” he said.

In the “Readers’ Choice Awards” from Midwest Gaming and Destinations, Island Resort & Casino ranked best in Michigan for “Restaurant,” “Buffet,” “Pool,” “Casino Personnel,” “Customer Service,” “Player’s Club,” and “Theme.”

Additionally, Sweetgrass Golf Club earned the “Golf Course” award. Since it opened in 2008, Sweetgrass has earned multiple awards, including 2019’s top ten ranking from Golfweek Magazine’s “Best Courses You Can Play in Michigan.”

For more information call 1-800-682-6040 or visit [islandresortandcasino.com](http://islandresortandcasino.com).