



Testimony of Adam Suliman  
to Senate General Government and Agency Review Committee  
on Senate Bill 111

November 6, 2019

Good morning Chairman Schuring and members of the General Government and Agency Review Committee. My name is Adam Suliman. I am the Vice President of Sports & Digital Gaming at JACK Entertainment and have been a part of the JACK team since we began development of our Ohio gaming facilities nearly ten years ago. JACK Entertainment and our broader family of companies have a deep history here in Ohio. Our gaming properties attract over 5 million guests every year and our 1,400 team members are incredibly proud to contribute to the growth and success of our host communities.

Thank you for the opportunity to appear before you today to discuss Senate Bill 111, the legislation to legalize sports wagering in Ohio. We certainly appreciate the hard work Senators Eklund and O'Brien have put in to bring legal sports wagering to Ohio. Many of our customers appreciate it as well.

We strongly support a highly regulated, legal gaming environment that includes legal sports wagering. When gaming is conducted in illegal markets, it capitalizes on enormous consumer demand while offering little to no protections for consumers. The parties involved in the gaming industry share many goals: we are all committed to eliminating the thriving illegal sports wagering market, protecting the integrity of both sports wagering and sporting competitions, and protecting consumers. We are confident these goals can and will be achieved through collaboration driven by mutual interest, and appropriate regulatory oversight.

If we are to accomplish our goals of eliminating illegal, black market, sports wagering from Ohio and competing effectively with surrounding states, we should all support sports wagering legislation that will put Ohio's operators on an even playing field with our competition.

First, we fully support in-person and mobile wagering in Ohio. The illegal sports betting business is \$150 billion dollar a year business, according to recent reports published by the American Gaming Association. We are dealing with a formidable opponent. The days of a local bookie taking bets on the corner are gone. The illegal bookmakers are sophisticated operations and they are taking wagers from Ohioans online and via mobile devices today. The legal,

regulated operators in Ohio will need to be able to offer products in the online and mobile space in order to make a dent in the illegal sports book industry. It has been widely reported more than 80% of the legal sports betting revenue in New Jersey comes through online and mobile channels. Similar figures are being reported in Pennsylvania. We applaud the sponsor's foresight on this topic as Senate Bill 111 does allow Ohio's legal operators to compete effectively in the online and mobile space and therefore maximize tax revenue for the State of Ohio.

Second, it's critical that Ohio's legal operators are able to offer a full suite of wagering products for Ohioans. The black market operators are already offering pre-match, live in-play, and player proposition wagering options for both professional and collegiate sporting events. The states surrounding Ohio are also offering this full suite of wagering options to their constituents. Consumers demand these products and if the legal operators are unable to offer them in Ohio, our customers will continue to seek those wagering opportunities through illegal channels or legal sports betting operations in neighboring states. Again, we applaud the sponsor's foresight on this issue. It's absolutely critical to the success of the sports wagering industry in Ohio to be able to offer the same wagering products as those we compete against.

Finally, we are excited about the prospect of adding physical sports books and related amenities at our properties here in Ohio. We are preparing to make significant capital investments and create new jobs at our facilities. Although the sports wagering business is an incredibly low margin business, we feel it's a crucial amenity that we can offer at our properties that will, when done properly, drive significant visitation and generate incremental gaming and food and beverage revenue. Our customers here in Ohio tell me regularly that they are looking forward to a day in the near future when they can wager legally on their favorite sporting event.

Again, we fully support well-regulated and legal sports wagering in Ohio. This is an option that our patrons and your constituents eagerly anticipate being offered in our state.

Thank you again for the opportunity to discuss this important topic with you today. I would be happy to answer any questions you might have.