



Chairman Killion, Chairman Williams, and members of the committee thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony for today's hearing regarding Senate Bill 1256. My name is Anthony Taormina, and I am the President of the Bowling Proprietors Association of Pennsylvania (BPAP). I would like to briefly discuss the benefits of allowing VGTs in Pennsylvania bowling centers.

Pennsylvania's bowling industry is unique because it is an industry primarily populated by small family owned and operated bowling centers. The vast majority of bowling centers located around the state are small family owned businesses. BPAP represents nearly 200 of the bowling centers throughout the Commonwealth.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic the bowling industry nationwide faced a serious decline between 2000 and 2012. Nearly a quarter of all bowling centers around the country were forced to close, a similar trend was seen in Pennsylvania as well. In the years since the bowling industry has been slowly recovering ever since.

Before I begin discussing VGTs, I would like to take a moment and discuss the current state of the bowling industry in Pennsylvania. The past seven months have been an extremely turbulent time for the industry. The height of the bowling season is March through May where most of our bowling centers make the necessary income to operate through the summer because of COVID-19 and the business restrictions all 282 bowling centers in Pennsylvania were closed during that peak season. The COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent business restriction have caused severe financial hardships for the bowling industry, and as a result, many bowling centers are finding themselves in a very challenging financial situation. Bowling centers are in need of additional revenue and increased foot traffic. BPAP believes that VGTs are a necessary part of the solution to help bowling centers and the economy to recover.

Looking past the difficulties caused by the COVID-19 pandemic to the bowling industry, another source of hardship for bowling centers comes in trying to compete with casinos for the consumers' increasingly limited entertainment dollar. Casinos offer free drinks and extremely low prices to get consumers in the door. Bowling centers must have the opportunity to offer the consumers comparable entertainment to what is offered by casinos. VGTs would offer a great new source of entertainment for our consumers.

In these very difficult times, the prospect of allowing VGTs in bowling centers is very exciting. Allowing VGTs to operate in bowling centers that hold liquor licenses would give those bowling centers access to a desperately needed source of revenue.



Five VGTs in one bowling center could generate between \$40,000 and \$50,000 annually. That additional revenue would not only help bowling centers get back on their feet, but it would also enable them to renovate their center, buy new equipment, and hire new employees. All of these changes would not only strength the individual bowling center, but also help the economy to recover. In addition, the State government would benefit from the tax revenue generated from these machines.

Thank you, Chairmen and Committee members, for your time.

Sincerely,

Anthony Taormina

Anthony Taormina
President
Bowling Proprietors' Association of Pennsylvania

Bowling Proprietors' Association of Pennsylvania
621 Six Flags Dr. | Arlington, TX 76011
(817) 385-8357