



July 14, 2020

House Committee on Finance
State of Rhode Island
82 Smith Street
Providence, RI 02903

Re: Support of H8097

Dear Members of the House Committee on Finance:

As a global sports entertainment company headquartered in Boston offering sports betting in nine states, DraftKings Inc. (“DraftKings”) writes in support of H8097. We support this bill to remove the in-person registration requirement from Rhode Island’s sports betting law because we believe that any state that requires in-person registration for mobile sports betting is not realizing the full potential of the market.

We strongly believe that in-person registration has a negative effect on the potential of any mobile sports wagering program. Any inconvenience or obstacle, no matter how small, that a user encounters in creating an account inevitably results in a drop-off in participation, and by far the biggest obstacle to using a mobile product is a requirement to physically travel to another location to register. Mobile registration is a secure and effective way to accurately verify a customer’s age and identity and can be confidently implemented for mobile sports betting the same way that it is for other ecommerce activities such as banking.

The importance of a fully mobile experience has never been more apparent than it is currently with the crisis of COVID-19. Rhode Islanders were unable to register for a sports betting account for months while casinos were closed, and many more may elect not to register in person when they are open due to health and safety concerns. A state-mandated in-person registration requirement is an unnecessary risk when registration can be safely completed from home.

While Rhode Island customers are unable or unwilling to register in person for an online sports betting account during the global pandemic, the country may see an unprecedented sports season in which most major sports leagues could be competing at the same time in the second half of this year. At a time when the state is facing a large budget deficit due to the pandemic, this is an opportune time to make Rhode Island’s mobile sports betting market more easily and safely available.

Removing the in-person registration requirement will allow the Rhode Island sports betting market to further mature and we respectfully urge you to support this change in H8097. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

/s/ Sarah Koch

Sarah Koch
Senior Director, Government Affairs
DraftKings Inc.