March 5, 2021

Dear Chairman Abney and members of House Finance:

I am writing in support of Speaker Shekarchi's Bill, H5223, which would allow the State of RI to enter into a long-term economic development agreement with IGT and Twin River.

I believe that this is a good thing for the state's economy and our long-term fiscal health.

Additionally, this agreement will guarantee that thousands of people will have access to good paying employment opportunities right here in RI.

I am a constituent of Representative Katherine Kazarian. I have been an IGT employee for 10 years and would like to share with you why IGT's continued economic partnership with the state of Rhode Island is important to me, my colleagues, my family, and my community.

I am a lifelong Rhode Islander. I feel so privileged to be working at such a great company as IGT. When I first entered the workforce in 1987, the two companies everyone wanted to work for were GTECH and The Providence Journal because they offered high paying salaries, and everyone knew if you worked there you would also retire from there as well. I did get hired at the Providence Journal in 1987 and was there for nine years until A.H. Belo bought the Providence Journal and I was laid off because the Broadcasting Department (the Providence Journal owned 10 TV stations across the U.S.) was going to operate out of their headquarters in Houston, TX. I landed a few other jobs after being laid off from the Providence Journal but were not good paying jobs so I had to work a second job to supplement my income. In 2006, I was hired by EMC in Hopkinton, Massachusetts as a Senior Executive Assistant. It was a high paying job but my commute was an hour to work and a 90 minute commute home. The commute was taking a toll on me and also on my vehicle. I always hoped that one day I could find a job in Rhode Island that would pay the salary I was receiving in Massachusetts so that I wouldn't have to deal with such a long commute. In 2009, I interviewed for a Senior Executive Assistant position at GTECH. I was so thrilled that I was hired by GTECH and would be working for such a great company that I had wanted to work at many years ago. I moved from Warwick, RI to Rumford, RI. I absolutely love living in Rumford and have been there for 9 years. My commute to work is 15 minutes.

I appreciate that IGT is a Rhode Island based company. If IGT was no longer based in Rhode Island, I know that I would have to look for employment in Massachusetts and also relocate there as well. I shop at a lot of small businesses in Rhode Island and would no longer be able to do so if I was to relocate to Massachusetts. Another thing I would miss if I was to relocate to Massachusetts is that I would no longer be in close distance to my family. Living in Rumford is so convenient because it's a short commute to work and a 15-minute drive to see family and friends. If IGT moves their headquarters out of Rhode Island, I feel so many of us who work here would be facing the same dilemmas.

I hope that you will send this bill to the House floor with a recommendation for passage.

Sincerely,

Teresa M. Lauro
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