



March 19, 2026

The Honorable Abigail Spanberger
1111 East Broad Street
Richmond, VA 23219

Dear Governor Spanberger:

We are state and local leaders of the Virginia Moose Association, one of Virginia's largest and most charitable service organizations. Virginia has 78 Moose Lodges with more than 62,000 members across every region of the Commonwealth.

We are writing to respectfully urge you to VETO SB661, which legalizes "skill" slot machines.

Charitable organizations like Moose Lodges that use Virginia's charitable gaming system are under tremendous pressure due to the dramatically expanded gaming environment. Over the past decade, the Commonwealth has authorized sports betting (online and in-person), casino gaming in host cities approved by local referendum, regulated fantasy sports contests, historical horse racing machines, and online lottery sales.

The last thing Virginia needs is another form of gambling, especially one that has not acted in good faith or followed Virginia law for most of the past decade.

While Moose Lodges and other nonprofits that use Virginia's charitable gaming laws have been heavily regulated, unauthorized "skill" slot machines have proliferated illegally all over the state in direct defiance of Virginia law and without any public accountability.

- Rewarding bad actors now by legalizing retail "skill" slot-style machines after prolonged noncompliance with state law sets a terrible precedent for how to do business in Virginia.
- Legalization will also destabilize an already oversaturated gaming market.

These devices also carry documented public safety impacts. Media reporting summarizing a 2022 Joint Legislative Audit & Review Commission (JLARC) study noted that prosecutors in multiple localities reported increases in crimes such as assault and robbery at establishments housing "skill" slot machines and cited specific violent incidents at convenience stores with these devices.¹

¹ 13News Now, reporting on JLARC study findings regarding crime increases at establishments with gray machines (2022).
<https://www.13newsnow.com/article/news/verify/skill-games-virginia-advertisements-verify/291-db993c85-a7e0-4795-bda5-458884db97ef>

The human toll is real. Earlier this month, on Virginia's Eastern Shore, a former police officer was sentenced to prison after stealing more than \$800,000 to finance a gambling addiction centered on “skill” slot machines in local convenience stores.²

Legalization would

- undermine our regulated charitable gaming that directly benefits Virginia communities,
- increase exposure of minors and vulnerable adults to high-frequency retail gambling,
- undermine Virginia's recent policy decisions to authorize 5 casinos and undercut significant public and private investment in those projects,
- reward years of unlawful conduct by operators who ignored statutory and judicial directives to cease activity.

At a time when your administration has emphasized **affordability and responsible governance**, expanding retail gambling in public places would move Virginia in the opposite direction.

For all these reasons, we respectfully urge you to veto "skill" slot machine legalization. Please contact Brook Archambeau, VMA Government Affairs Chair, at (757) 407-0034 with questions.

Thank you for your attention to our concerns.

Respectfully,

Brooke Archambeau

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Deborah Moore

VMA District 9 President
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² Shore Daily News, “Brady Sentenced to Three Years and Restitution for Wire Fraud,” detailing sentencing of former Eastville police officer for fraud tied to gambling losses (2024)

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Mechanicsville, VA

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