

Maryland Center *of* Excellence *on* Problem Gambling

2026 Legislative Preview

2026 Maryland Legislative Session

January 14: Session convenes

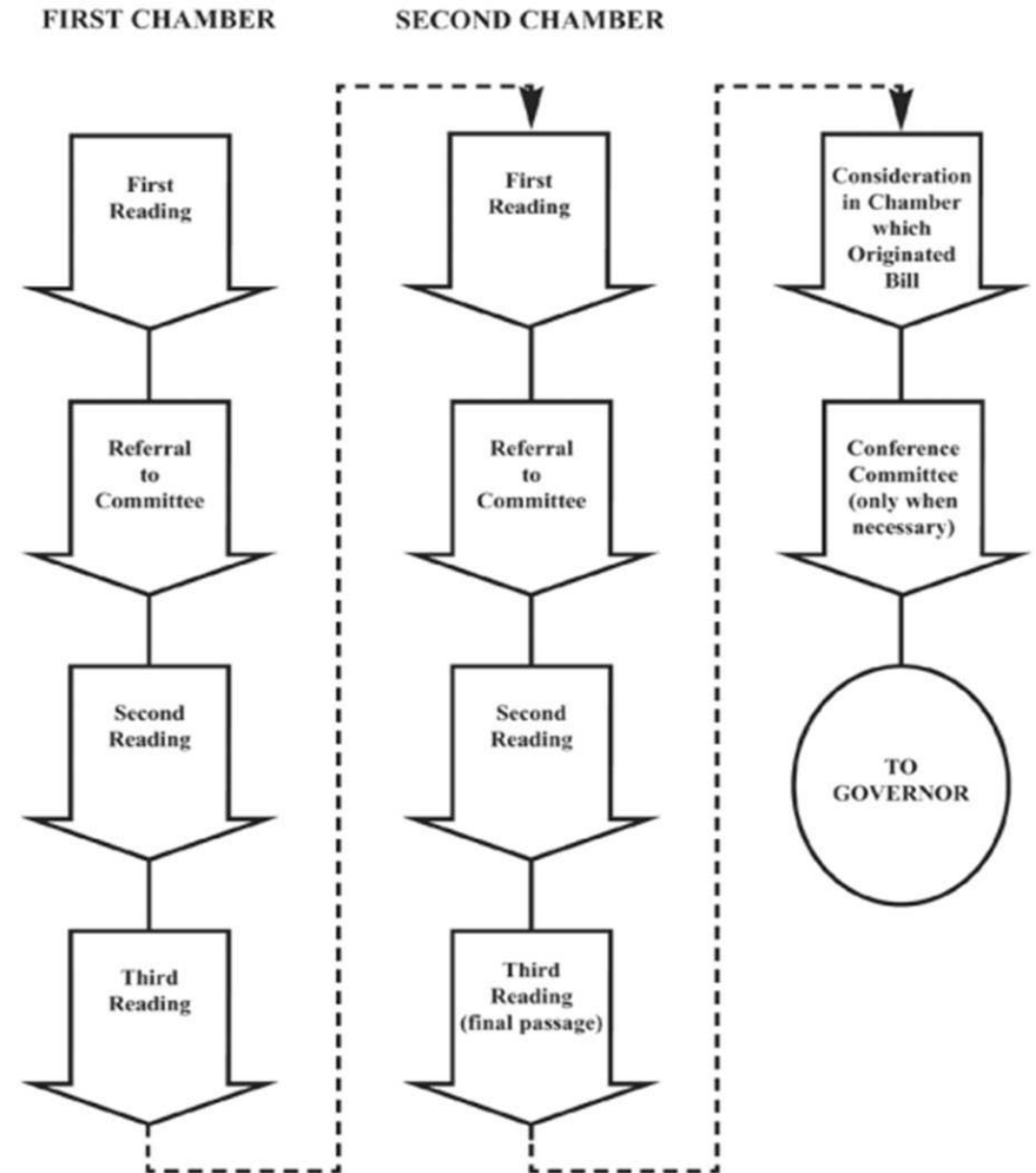
February 9: Senate bill introduction deadline

February 13: House bill introduction deadline

March 23: Bill crossover deadline

April 13: Sine Die

May 13: Final day for extended session



Maryland General Assembly

- **188 Members**
 - 141 House of Delegates/47 Senate: 3 for 1 ratio
- [Find Your Legislators](#)
- **Four Year Cycle: 2026 4th Year of Term**
- [Current Member Profile](#) (2025)

First Reading

“Read” by Clerk of House/Secretary of Senate & Assigned to Committee

Senate Committees

- Budget and Taxation
- Education, Energy, and the Environment
- Executive Nominations
- Finance
- Judicial Proceedings
- Rules

House Committees

- Appropriations
- Economic Matters
- Environment and Transportation
- Health and Government Operations
- Rules and Executive Nominations
- Judiciary
- Ways and Means Committee

Hearing

- Everyone who signs in will be heard in person
- Some virtual testimony permitted
- Create panels and avoid duplication
- Proponents then Opponents; so rebut in advance (unless large number of people; then may alternate panels)
- Oral testimony should be 2-3 minutes long—DO NOT READ!!!

After the Hearing

- May be assigned to a sub-committee to make recommendation to committee; focus on those members
- Committee Voting Sessions
- May make amendments; vote on them first (simple majority)
- Majority vote (tie does NOT pass): Favorable (with amendments); Unfavorable; No Position (rare); Refer to Interim Study (technically dead)
- Only favorable (or favorable with amendment) passed on to full body
- Floor Report Prepared

Second Reading

- Presented at Floor Session; “Committee Reprint” if extensive amendments
- Opportunity for question and debate
- May be amended; if offered, voted on first; majority carries
- Special Order—to a date certain; Laid Over—next day/session
- Voice Vote—majority
- Ordered “printed for third reading” (except if crossed over; then “passed to third reader”)

Third Reading

- May NOT be amended unless is CROSSED OVER BILL
- Roll Call—recorded vote; majority
- **Majority exceptions:
 - Constitutional Amendment or Emergency Bill: 3/5 of each house
- Crossover... rinse and repeat

Presentment to the Governor

- Must be presented within 20 days of adjournment (does not become law if not presented)
- GOVERNOR may: 1) sign; 2) do nothing; 3) veto
- No veto of constitutional amendment
- Veto Override: At next session (whether regular or special); 3/5 vote of each chamber to override

Effective Date

- Emergency: on signature of Governor (or on 7th day after presentment) or other date set in bill
- Fiscal: July 1
- General: October 1
- Earliest: June 1
- Latest: Can be whenever in future

Bill Tracking

Public Policy Listserv

Legislative Tracker

<https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgaweb/site/>

- Register for a free account at MyMGA



Potential Bills

HB 328 (2025): State Lottery – Instant Ticket Lottery Machines – Veterans’ and Fraternal Organizations

- Veto override
- Allows the Maryland Lottery and Gaming Control Agency to issue a license for up to five instant ticket lottery machines to fraternal organizations
- Adds potentially hundreds of new machines at dozens of additional sites in the state
- Governor’s reasons for veto:
 - Undercuts revenue for the Education Trust Fund
 - Reduces revenue for veteran service organizations
 - Undercuts the state’s problem gambling treatment programs

Sweepstakes

“Online sweepstakes game” means a game, contest, or promotion that:

1. Is available on the internet or accessible on a mobile phone, computer terminal, or similar device;
2. Utilizes a dual–currency system of payment allowing the player to exchange the currency for any prize or award or cash or cash equivalents, or any chance to win any prize or award or cash or cash equivalents; and
3. Simulates:
 - a) Casino–style gaming, such as slot machines, video poker, and table games, including blackjack, roulette, craps, and poker;
 - b) Lottery games, including draw games, instant win games, keno, and bingo; and
 - c) Sports wagering

Internet Gaming

- Casino–style gaming through an online gaming system on a computer, a mobile device, or any other interactive device
- iGaming is one of the most addictive activities available
- The ease of access to iGaming is expected to lead to more health and emotional difficulties that come with gambling disorders including substance abuse, depression, and increased suicide rates

Advocacy



The Maryland Center of Excellence
on Problem Gambling

How To Contact Your Elected Official

- Ideally, you are registered to vote
 - https://elections.maryland.gov/voter_registration/application.html
- Who are they? www.mdelect.net
- Mail, fax, or email letters
 - <https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/>
 - Hand-written letters are impressive, typed non-form letters are effective
 - Form letters and post cards are the least effective unless in mass numbers
- Call your legislators
- Visits

Hearing & Testimony

- Can be written and/or oral
- 2-3 minutes MAX
- Tell them your story
- Requires advance registration
 - <https://mgaleg.maryland.gov/mgawebsite/>

Committee members can ask questions

- Don't worry about technical questions, just tell it from your perspective and let them know you'll get back to them with the technical answers (then follow up)



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- ✓ Awareness
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- ✓ **Public Policy**



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