

BILL: Senate Bill 1108
TITLE: Video Lottery Terminals - Disposition of Unclaimed Winnings
DATE: March 17, 2016
POSITION: SUPPORT
COMMITTEE: Budget and Taxation Committee
CONTACT: John R. Woolums, Esq.

The Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE), representing all of the state's local boards of education, supports Senate Bill 1108.

This bill would reasonably amend the law to require that a jackpot won at a video lottery terminal (VLT) that is not claimed by the winner within 182 days after the jackpot is won, would become the property of the State and be deposited into the Education Trust Fund (ETF).

MABE appreciates the role of the Education Trust Fund (ETF) as the repository of a significant portion of the state revenues generated through licensed gaming activities. This is especially true in the case of VLT gaming revenue relative to table game revenue. In the future, as long-term funding strategies are considered to enhance state investments in public education, MABE anticipates the consideration of proposals to reform the ETF to provide supplemental funding, and to receive a higher percentage of VLT and table game revenues. Local school systems would benefit from an ETF that operated in such a way that increased state aid to education rather than utilizing gaming revenues to achieve the mandated funding amounts.

In this context, MABE certainly supports this bill's proposal to designate the ETF as the repository of unclaimed VLT jackpots. In addition, MABE supports the amendments adopted to House Bill 300, the cross-filed bill, which now includes several other recipients of unclaimed winnings.

For these reasons, MABE requests a favorable report on Senate Bill 1108.