

**PENNSYLVANIA
DEPARTMENT OF AGING**

LONG-TERM CARE COUNCIL


EST. 2015

September 10, 2019

Dear Members of the Pennsylvania General Assembly:

I am writing on behalf of the Pennsylvania Long-Term Care Council (LTCC) to urge your support of Senate Bill 710 and House Bill 931, which would protect and safeguard the Pennsylvania Lottery and the senior programs it funds from illegal gambling devices advertised as games of “skill.” The LTCC unanimously voted to endorse this legislation during its recent meeting and to urge swift passage by the General Assembly.

Pennsylvania is extremely fortunate to have a Lottery system that supports older adults. Hundreds of thousands of Pennsylvania seniors depend on Lottery-funded programs and services to maintain their independence, such as the Property Tax/Rent Rebate Program, prescription drug assistance through PACE and PACENET, protective services, home-delivered meals, senior community centers, OPTIONS home and community-based services, and other vital supports. With the fifth oldest population in the nation, the need for these programs and services is only growing as Pennsylvania’s older adult population will increase by over 25% in the next decade given our aging baby boomers. However, the proliferation of illegal gaming threatens the commonwealth’s ability to meet the needs of its seniors, both now and in the future, as Lottery revenue is siphoned off by these unsanctioned devices.

According to the Pennsylvania State Police, there are an estimated 20,000 games of skill machines in Pennsylvania and that number is rapidly rising. The annual impact to the Lottery is estimated at \$180 million, with millions more in jeopardy for senior programs if action is not taken. To combat these illegal games and protect seniors, Senator Robert Tomlinson and Representative Ed Neilson introduced Senate Bill 710 and House Bill 931, respectively, which would strengthen the Crimes Code to help law enforcement seize these devices and make it illegal to make or sell games of skill machines.

In order to help protect Lottery-funded programs for seniors, the LTCC respectfully requests your support in ensuring the prompt passage of Senate Bill 710 and House Bill 931.

Sincerely,



Charles W. Quinnan
Executive Director
Pennsylvania Long-Term Care Council