



June 4, 2018

The Honorable John Daley
Chairman
Committee on Finance
Cook County Board of Commissioners
118 North Clark Street
Chicago, Illinois 60601

Dear Chairman Daley,

On behalf of the Illinois Restaurant Association (IRA) and the thousands of operators in the restaurant and hospitality industries we represent, I respectfully request your full support of legislation to permit video gaming in unincorporated Cook County.

At the IRA, one of our central missions is to advocate for pragmatic legislation and policies that enable Illinois' restaurants, bars, and entertainment venues to thrive. We are proponents of video gaming in Illinois, as it is a proven revenue generator for restaurants, municipalities, and the state that allows hospitality operators to offer an attractive source of entertainment to their customers.

According to the Chicago Tribune, video gaming brought in \$326,000,000 in tax money in 2017 – and none of that revenue is currently reaching unincorporated Cook County. Video gaming will create an immediate revenue source in these communities without further burdening our citizens with additional taxation.

Unincorporated Cook County's allowance of video gaming will have a direct positive impact on existing bars, restaurants, veterans, and fraternal organizations by boosting revenue and creating jobs. The additional revenue created by video gaming will enable our local businesses to remain in operation by offsetting increases to real estate taxes, rent, minimum wage, paid sick leave and other increasing expenses associated with operating a business in Cook County.

Video gaming would positively add to local neighborhood entertainment options and keep our residents entertained locally without losing their gaming business to surrounding areas with gaming options. It will build a foundation for existing restaurant expansion and provide additional revenue necessary to support new restaurant and cafe concepts.

I respectfully urge your support of permitting video gaming in unincorporated Cook County. If I can answer any questions or provide more information, please contact me at (312) 380-4114 or stoia@illinoisrestaurants.org. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Sam Toia
President & CEO
Illinois Restaurant Association



Cc: The Honorable Toni Preckwinkle
The Honorable Bridget Gainer
The Honorable Deborah Sims
The Honorable Dennis Deer
The Honorable Edward Moody
The Honorable Gregg Goslin
The Honorable Jeffrey R Tobolski
The Honorable Jerry Butler
The Honorable Jesus G. Garcia
The Honorable John A. Fritchey
The Honorable Larry Suffredin
The Honorable Luis Arroyo, Jr.
The Honorable Peter N. Silvestri
The Honorable Richard R. Boykin
The Honorable Sean M. Morrison
The Honorable Stanley Moore
The Honorable Timothy O. Schneider