



GUIDANCE FOR IGMOA/SMSIL COALITION MEMBERS: VIDEO GAMING EXPANSION IN LOCAL COMMUNITIES

As Illinois prepares to implement the needed video gaming expansion this summer, about 90 Illinois communities either have ordinances or are considering not allowing the sixth machines in our establishments. The Illinois Gaming Machine Operators Association and Support Main Street Illinois Coalition urge you to meet with your local officials as soon as possible to educate them on the benefits of this expansion and making clear local laws that will allow it:

Small businesses like ours are under significant pressures. Video gaming expansion, much like an attractive new menu item, is critical to our survival

- The statewide minimum wage increase to \$15 an hour over the next few years will increase our employee expenses
- Higher taxes on video gaming – from 30 percent to 33 percent this year, and up to 34 percent next year – will hurt our bottom lines
- Other taxes are going up, from property taxes at the local level to the new doubling of the state gas tax. All of these decrease customers coming in our doors and the money they have to spend when they do come in.
- Video gaming for the past seven years has proven to help us withstand all of these pressures. The dollars people play in our machines go right back into our businesses, into our employees' pockets, and into the local businesses we support.
- Where it makes sense, the additional machines can alleviate these other tax and fee pressures. Without them, the burden of higher video gaming taxes and other costs falls on our shoulders

Limiting video gaming in our communities doesn't just hurt us. This is a partnership. Your local government revenues will decline as well

- Video gaming is more than a revenue boost for small businesses. It's become a vital lifeline for governments as well.
- State and local governments have received more than \$1.5 billion in taxes since 2012 – paying for police cars and fire engines, supporting local programs, allowing for charitable sponsorships.
- Refusing to allow these extra machines will hurt **YOUR** revenues, too.
- IGMOA estimates total video gaming revenues in the next 18-24 months will go up by about 20 percent – but only if the full expansion can take place. Higher taxes without extra machines is a real lost opportunity for all of us.