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Executive Director of Michigan Gaming Control Board commends agency's selection as 2024 Global Regulatory Awards finalist

DETROIT, Aug. 12, 2024 — Henry Williams, the Executive Director of the Michigan Gaming Control Board (MGCB), is proud to announce that the agency has been recognized as a finalist for the prestigious Vixio's 2024 Global Regulatory Awards in the highly competitive category of Regulatory Initiative of the Year. The MGCB's recognition stems from its unwavering efforts to combat illegal gambling activities and uphold the integrity of Michigan's thriving gaming industry.

The [Global Regulatory Awards](#) showcase and celebrate organizations within the gambling industry that excel in areas such as compliance, corporate social responsibility, and safer gambling. The MGCB's nomination in the Regulatory Initiative of the Year category highlights its proactive stance on combating illegal gambling, which fosters a transparent and accountable gaming industry. The agency's decisive actions against illegal gambling enterprises ensure a fair and regulated gaming environment in the state, protecting Michigan citizens from fraudulent activities and maintaining the integrity of the industry.

A key component behind these decisions is the MGCB's Criminal Investigations Section (CIS), which serves as a valuable resource, offering gaming investigative expertise to Board staff and various law enforcement and regulatory agencies at federal, state, county, and local levels.

"In one of the fastest-growing U.S. gaming markets, the MGCB continues to identify and remove casino-style gaming machines from businesses, dismantle illicit gambling operations, and uphold Michigan's gaming laws," **MGCB Executive Director Henry Williams** said. "Through strategic initiatives and close collaboration with stakeholders, the agency's Criminal Investigations Section within the Licensing and Investigations Division conducts regulatory and criminal investigations in coordination with the Michigan Attorney General's Office, ensuring a safe and responsible gaming environment."

Last year, the CIS issued warning letters to 26 Michigan residents who were conducting illegal gambling via social media. Cease-and-desist letters were also sent to five unlicensed online gaming websites for conducting illegal gambling in Michigan. Sweepstakes casino operators and certain unregulated gaming sites have taken note of the MGCB's continued regulatory efforts to enforce



Michigan gaming laws and are subsequently making their own business decisions to cease operations in the state.

Also during 2023, 64 Michigan businesses received letters to cease the identified illegal gambling, which led to 167 machines either being removed or taken out of operation. As a result of MGCB investigations and in partnership with the Michigan Attorney General's office, 79 machines used for illegal gambling were seized, nine individuals received criminal gambling convictions, seven illegal gambling locations were closed, and charges were authorized against 29 individuals last year.

On a national scale, the MGCB is particularly keeping a watchful eye on the presence of unauthorized, offshore illegal gambling websites that continue to be a growing concern. To that end, the agency has taken a proactive lead on issuing cease-and-desist letters to illegal online gaming companies, such as Bovada, as a means to ensure that Michigan maintains a robust and responsible gaming environment — setting a precedent for other states to follow in the fight against illegal gambling.

“The MGCB’s efforts to combat illegal gambling provides an opportunity to educate Michigan citizens and raise awareness about the risks involved in illegal gambling, as well as an opportunity to promote responsible gaming practices,” **Williams** added. “Ultimately, these actions all collectively contribute to safer communities, deter criminal elements, and uphold public trust in the gaming sector, benefiting both the agency and state citizens alike by contributing to the social welfare and economic prosperity of the Great Lakes State.”

As one of six finalists in Regulatory Initiative of the Year category, the MGCB is honored to be recognized alongside such distinguished organizations from around the world, including the Betting and Gaming Council of the UK, the Botswana Gambling Authority, the Louisiana Attorney General's Office, NVSEP (National Voluntary Self-Exclusion Program) by idPair, and the San Manuel Gaming Commission from California as finalists in this category. Each finalist exemplifies a commitment to regulatory excellence and innovation in their respective jurisdictions.

Award winners will be announced at the eighth-annual Global Regulatory Awards gala hosted by VIXIO GamblingCompliance that will take place on December 4 in London, where an independent panel of industry experts judges each award submission, ensuring Global Regulatory Award winners are the best across the global gambling industry.

*Gambling in any form is for entertainment purposes only. If you or someone you know may have a gambling problem, contact the National Problem Gambling Helpline at **1-800-GAMBLER**, text 800GAM, or visit www.1800gamblerchat.org. Help is available 24/7 and is free and confidential. Michigan citizens can also visit the [Responsible Gaming page of the MGCB website](#) for information on self-exclusion programs including the Disassociated Persons List and the Internet Gaming and Sports Betting Responsible Gaming Database, and DontRegretTheBet.org for additional tools to game responsibly.*

The Michigan Gaming Control Board shall ensure the conduct of fair and honest gaming to protect the interests of the citizens of the state of Michigan. Learn more at Michigan.gov/MGCB.