

# MARYLAND RETAILERS ALLIANCE

*The Voice of Retailing in Maryland*



**HB339 Unemployment Insurance - Disqualification - Stoppage of Work Caused by  
Labor Dispute  
Economic Matters Committee  
February 14<sup>th</sup>, 2024**

**Position:** Unfavorable

**Background:** HB339 would remove the prohibition on filing for unemployment insurance if an individual's stoppage of work is caused by a labor dispute.

**Comments:** The Maryland Retailers Alliance has concerns about the impact that HB339 Unemployment Insurance - Disqualification - Stoppage of Work Caused by Labor Dispute would have on business operations in Maryland. Maryland has a record-low unemployment rate at this time, and the Office of the Comptroller's inaugural State of the Economy reported in January that there are 3.1 job openings for every job seeker in Maryland. This tight labor market has resulted in increased wages and expanded benefits in many industries, and many retail businesses are already offering higher than the State minimum wage. Our members would find it very difficult to support policies that could exacerbate existing labor issues or result in extended work stoppages.

It is our understanding that the Department of Labor has not expressed support for HB339. For this and the above reasons, we would respectfully urge an unfavorable report on this proposal. Thank you for your consideration.