

February 25, 2021

The Honorable Anne R. Kaiser, Chair
House Ways and Means Committee
House Office Building, Room 131
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Chairwoman Kaiser:

I am writing on behalf of two professional minor league baseball teams located in Charles County and Washington County to voice our support with amendments for **HB 940: Gaming - Regulation of Fantasy Gaming Competitions and Implementation of Sports Wagering**. We understand that tackling a complex topic as sports wagering during such a trying time is no simply task. We appreciate the focus this bill places on allowing professional sports teams to take part in this exciting new market. As professional minor league teams, we understand that we play a critical role in our communities. In Charles County, we even opened up our stadium and parking lot as a Covid-19 testing site. Our site is also about to be deployed by the State as a mass vaccination site in the coming weeks and months. But the global pandemic has hit the world of baseball especially hard, resulting in cancelled seasons and minimal revenue. Participating in sports wagering presents an opportunity for our teams to not only rebound but to provide much needed tax revenue to Maryland and our local communities.

We are concerned that smaller venues and communities need to be included in this legislation and the opportunity and equity for such smaller communities be considered and specifically included. Although we are professional minor league baseball teams, the proposed bill limits the number of locations where sports wagers may be accepted to professional sports teams that share a county with a casino. As neither Charles County nor Washington County has a casino, we are excluded in the current text. We support an amendment that removes the in-county requirement for allowing professional sports teams to accept wagers. We are also in support of an amendment that would expand the number of mobile licenses and allow smaller players who are invested in community recreation and wellness to partake in the industry. We understand that an increase in mobile licenses would result in stronger competition and increased revenue for the state. For these reasons, our position on this bill is **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS**.

Thank you,
Jack Lavoie