



March 7, 2024

To: The Honorable Bill Ferguson, President of the Maryland Senate  
The Honorable Adrienne Jones, Speaker of the Maryland House of Delegate  
Senator Guy Guzzone, Chair of the Md Senate Committee on Budget and Taxation  
Delegate Vanessa Atterbeary, Chair of the Md House Committee on Ways and Means

From: Tracy Lingo, President of UNITE HERE Local 7

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Tracy Lingo", is written over the "From:" line.

Re: Fanatics, a proponent of legalizing iGaming in Maryland

It's not what you say, it's what you do that matters.

Last week during the House Ways and Means and the Senate Budget and Taxation committee hearings on iGaming Bills, proponents professed that iGaming would bring thousands of good union jobs to Maryland. **Among the proponents testifying was Brandt Iden, Vice President of Government Affairs for Fanatics.** Fanatics is a leading provider of licensed sports merchandise and global digital sports platforms. The company already operates one of Maryland's online Sports Betting Aps. Fanatics also operates a massive online and retail store empire that sells sports team apparel. Among its retail operations is Camden Yards which Fanatics began operating during the last quarter of 2022. This includes the year-round Orioles Team Store and the Game Day retail stores and kiosks.

**iGaming proponents want us to believe that iGaming is not a job killer but will create thousands of good union jobs in Maryland if iGaming is legalized. The reality of Fanatics as an employer in Maryland, is quite different.**

Fanatics has been in a labor dispute with its retail workers at Camden Yards who are members of UNITE HERE Local 7 for over twelve months. **Negotiations for a first Union contract have stalled over Fanatics' insistence that their business model does not include full-time work for hourly paid workers.**

For many years, the previous unionized retail operators at Camden Yards have scheduled employees for as many full-time schedules as possible, thereby maximizing the number of year-round workers who could qualify for health insurance and other full-time benefits. The Orioles Team store is open year-round, five days a week for thirty hours a week. UNITE HERE Local 7 has asked Fanatics to schedule workers for full-time hours where available. Fanatics has refused. In contrast, Fanatics restricts workers to working two to three days per week, thirteen to nineteen hours a week. Fanatics also refuses to provide health insurance for hourly workers because they are not scheduled for full time hours, despite the fact that full time schedules are possible.

Can we trust iGaming operators' assertions that they will create good union jobs? Fanatics has done the exact opposite by taking full-time jobs and dividing them into part time jobs with no benefits. We urge our State Senators and Delegates not to gamble with Maryland jobs. Say NO to ALL iGaming bills.