



David Heindel
President

Tom Orzechowski
*Executive Vice President/
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Augustin Tellez
Executive Vice President

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Vice President

**Testimony offered on behalf of:
Shane Sterry**

IN OPPOSITION TO:

**SB 0603 – Internet Gaming
Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
Hearing: 2/28/2024 @ 1:00pm**

Good Afternoon Mister Chairman and Honorable Members of the Senate Budget and Taxation Committee.

My name is Shane Sterry. I am the Assistant Vice President of the Seafarers Entertainment and Allied Trades Union. Between Hollywood Casino in Perryville and Maryland Live, our union represents well over 1000 casino workers in the State of Maryland. We also represent thousands of casino workers in other States.

As a union, we have personal experience with internet gaming. On that basis, I am here today to OPPOSE SB 0603.

Over the past decade, since casino gaming was legalized in Maryland, our members have worked hard to bring revenue to the casino owners, and tax dollars to the State. We have negotiated in good faith with casino operators for jobs that pay a living wage, that have health care benefits for our members and their families, and for job protections.

In every State where iGaming has been legalized, there have been negative ramifications. I am not here to dwell on the societal negatives of iGaming,



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such as gaming addiction, underage gaming, and financial ruin faced by many people. You are well aware of these risks.

What I am here to discuss is the job loss that our members, and other casino workers will suffer if iGaming is approved.

You need look no further than to Pennsylvania and New Jersey to have first hand information about iGaming and jobs. In Pennsylvania, 2,000 casino jobs were lost since iGaming was introduced. In New Jersey, nearly sixteen thousand, let me repeat SIXTEEN THOUSAND, jobs were lost because of iGaming.

The most conservative reports about iGaming in Maryland suggest that over 2000 jobs will be lost if iGaming is passed. A study by the Anne Arundel County Chamber of Commerce projected 2,700 jobs here will be lost.

As a union that works hard to protect our members, and to ensure we get our 'fair share' of the profit casino operators make, it was always my sense that the obstacles we faced were the casino owners. With the introduction of this Bill, it is now clear to me that it is not just casino owners who we must deal with, but our own elected legislators. By passing this Bill, you are directly saying that these 2000 jobs are not important, and that the revenue to the State is more important.

As I am sure you know, just last month New York Governor Kathy Hochul withdrew from her 2025 budget plans for iGaming. Members of her staff noted that it was job loss, and social risks, that prompted her decision.

As our elected legislators, I have great admiration for the work you do. I do not want your job. It must be quite vexing to repeatedly balance the services needed for the residents, the cost of those services, and where the money will come from. And while I understand the economic attraction of iGaming, studies show that iGaming will take money away from brick



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and mortar casinos. In turn this will impact our members' jobs, and their personal finances.

I urge you to vote against Senate Bill 0603.

Respectfully,

Shane Sterry
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