

March 20, 2024

The Honorable Wes Moore
Governor
State House
100 State Circle
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Governor Moore,

On behalf of the more than 250,000 members of UNITE HERE, including 2,400 Maryland casino workers, I urge you to oppose the legalization of iGaming.

Legalizing iGaming would eliminate union jobs at brick-and-mortar casinos in Maryland and harm future economic development.

The State of Maryland should protect union jobs. Through collective bargaining, members of our union at the MGM National Harbor, Horseshoe Baltimore, and Ocean Downs Casino have achieved high standards for wages, benefits, and workplace protections.

The only way to maximize job creation and investment from the gaming industry is to keep gaming at brick-and-mortar facilities. Online gaming companies have argued that iGaming could create jobs in live dealer studios for some games offered online. But we know that brick-and-mortar casinos employ many more people than just dealers – cooks, dishwashers, servers, bartenders, cleaners, valets, hotel staff, and more. These workers depend on in-person business and tips. Beyond direct employment, casinos spark surrounding development projects. In Baltimore, the Horseshoe has been a catalyst for the development of The Walk @ Warner Street that now includes a Top Golf and could include a new music venue, hotel, and retail space in the future. In Worcester County, Ocean Downs is considering adding a hotel. These development plans would be put at risk by competition from iGaming reducing in-person activity at the casinos.

Legalizing iGaming will reduce Maryland's brick-and-mortar casino revenue by 10.2%, according to a report produced by The Innovation Group for the Maryland Lottery. It based its projection on a comparison of in-person gaming revenues in states with and without iGaming. From 2019 to 2022, states with iGaming saw in-person revenues decline 8.2%, while states without iGaming saw in-person revenues grow 2%, implying a "cannibalization rate" of 10.2%. Maryland's six brick-and-mortar casinos directly employ 6,678 people as of January. According to the American Gaming Association, Maryland's gaming industry supports 27,380 jobs. If a 10.2% reduction in brick-and-mortar revenue creates a 10.2% reduction in employment, it would mean a loss of over 680 direct jobs and over 2,700 total jobs. The Sage Policy Group projected a loss of 685 direct jobs with \$33.6 million in lost annual income and a total loss of

approximately 1,215 jobs with over \$65 million in lost annual income through direct and secondary effects.

We need to be creating more union jobs to lift up our communities. iGaming will set us backwards by causing union members to lose their jobs. Please stand with hard working families that rely on these jobs to provide for their loved ones.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "D. R. Taylor". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, stylized "D" and "T".

D. Taylor
President
UNITE HERE International Union

Cc: William Ferguson, President, Maryland State Senate
Adrienne Jones, Speaker, Maryland House of Delegates
Guy Guzzone, Chair, Senate Budget and Taxation Committee
Vanessa Atterbeary, Chair, House Ways and Means Committee
Eric Luedtke, Chief Legislative Officer for Governor Moore