

## House Bill 339

Date: February 12, 2024  
Committee: House Economic Matters Committee  
Bill Title: Unemployment Insurance - Disqualification - Stoppage of Work Caused by Labor  
Dispute  
Re: **Letter of Information**

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The Maryland Department of Labor administers the Unemployment Insurance (UI) program. Under current law, a worker whose labor dispute has resulted in them being locked out of their employment is currently eligible for UI benefits, while a striking worker is currently ineligible for UI benefits. HB 339 would make striking workers eligible for UI benefits after a strike has lasted at least two weeks.

Workers across industry have been exercising their right to take collective action to protect their jobs, wages, and working conditions. Since there is no way to know if a strike will last a few days, weeks, or months, UI could be a vital economic buffer for working people if they leave work to go on strike, or because of a strike. Multiple states around the country are examining how to provide UI benefits to striking workers. **The Department is engaged in discussion with the bill sponsor and looks forward to working with the bill sponsor to address operational questions within the bill.**