



Cory Fox
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February 4, 2025

Delegate Vanessa E. Atterbeary – Chair
Maryland House Ways and Means Committee

Re: FanDuel comments in opposition to House Bill 0484

Dear Chair Atterbeary and the Members of the House Ways and Means Committee:

I write to provide comments on behalf of FanDuel Group, Inc. (“FanDuel”) regarding House Bill 484 (“HB 484”), which proposes to alter the definition of “fantasy competition” and establish a voluntary exclusion program for fantasy competitions. Based on our extensive experience as an operator in the fantasy sports and online sports betting industries, we offer these comments in opposition to HB 484 as currently drafted.

FanDuel commends HB 484 for seeking to advance responsible gaming in Maryland, a key requirement for the continued success of online fantasy sports and sports wagering in the state. However, the practical impact of the additions would be very limited given that (1) Maryland regulations already require fantasy operators to implement an RG plan and (2) the major operators who offer both fantasy competitions and sports wagering, which includes FanDuel, already apply robust RG programs to both offerings whether or not required by regulation.

Concerningly, the proposed amendments in HB 484 would also legalize “fantasy competitions” where “a single participant competes against a statistical measurement established by the fantasy competition operator.” These types of “contests” are not fantasy competitions as defined by every other state with a fantasy contest definition and regulations; rather, they are traditional sports wagering proposition bet parlays against the house that are identical to those offered by licensed, regulated sportsbooks in Maryland today. Accordingly, there is already an available path in Maryland for such offerings under an existing regulatory scheme.

Many states have chosen to restrict house-backed proposition wagers offered under the guise of “fantasy contests” from being offered under regulated fantasy competition regimes precisely because they are more akin to sports wagering than traditional fantasy contest offerings. No state has legalized fantasy sports in a manner that explicitly includes such house-backed propositions. The contests sought to be classified as “fantasy contests” in HB 484 consist entirely of individuals’ wagers, directly with an operator, on how real-world athletes will perform during sporting events. This characteristic distinguishes them from peer-to-peer contests, where contestants compete against each other and fantasy operators only have a financial incentive for contests to fill the available number of entries.

Regulated fantasy and sports wagering regimes are structured differently, with the latter including more significant suitability, financial and operational requirements for market participants, commensurate with the offerings each market includes. As a rule, all states to date that have legalized and regulated sports wagering and fantasy sports have subjected prop bets and parlays against the house to the heightened standards and regulatory oversight of their sports wagering laws rather than their fantasy sports laws.



Licensed sports wagering operators are required to offer significantly more RG protections and controls than HB 484 contemplates for fantasy contest operators. For example, sports wagering operators are required to offer readily accessible tools to encourage responsible engagement with regulated platforms (e.g., RG limits that allow individuals to control their deposit and wagering activity, or the time they spend engaging with a sports wagering platform). Sports wagering operators also have enhanced responsibilities requiring comprehensive controls to ensure that wagering advertising is not directed towards excluded individuals. Sports wagering operators are also subject to more rigorous suitability and licensing reviews, required to maintain significant financial reserves, and undergo more comprehensive audits. These features, along with other essential enhanced account security, financial, and operational standards for sports wagering operators, would be absent for sports wagers authorized under the amended definition of “fantasy competition” in HB 484.

Maryland made a deliberate decision to legalize sports wagering and require potential participants in that market to undergo a rigorous and thorough licensing process to earn the privilege of offering these types of wagers to Maryland customers in a safe and responsible manner. If enacted, HB 484 would negate Maryland’s conscious and careful choice to establish this process by providing an avenue for unlicensed sports wagering operators to offer these wagers to Maryland residents. Stated plainly, the path to offer the types of wagers contemplated by HB 484 already exists, and operators seeking to offer them may do so by applying for a sports wagering license.

We appreciate your time and consideration of our comments and would be happy to discuss at your convenience.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Cory Fox', written over a light blue horizontal line.

Cory Fox

Vice President for Product and New Market Compliance