

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

**IN OPPOSITION TO:
HB 1255 – Internet Gaming
Hearing: 3/5/2026**

Good afternoon, Chairwoman Wilkins and Honorable Members of the House Ways and Means 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 across the country in various other States.

As a union representing casino workers, we have firsthand experience with the realities of internet gaming expansion. On that basis, I am here today to strongly OPPOSE HB 1255.

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

In every State where iGaming has been legalized, there have been negative ramifications to the casino industry and its workforce. I am not here to dwell on the societal negatives of iGaming, 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 and the livable wage decrease that every tipped employee will face if iGaming is approved.

Pennsylvania and New Jersey provide clear examples of iGaming's effect on casino employment. In Pennsylvania, more than 4,000 casino jobs were lost after iGaming was introduced, and in New Jersey, roughly 16,000 jobs were lost.

Even the most conservative reports about iGaming in Maryland suggest that **between 1,290 and 1,600 jobs will be lost if iGaming is passed. By comparison, in Michigan - one of the largest states to implement iGaming, an average of just 6 jobs were created per iGaming license.**

Physical casinos reinvest revenues into schools, infrastructure, local events, public safety, and local businesses. By contrast, iGaming often funnels profits out of state, depriving communities of vital resources and funding. iGaming simply steals its revenue from the existing brick-and-mortar casino operations.

As a union that works hard to protect our members, and to ensure our members get a 'fair share' of the profit casino operators make, it was always my sense that the obstacles we faced were the casino owners. By passing this Bill, you are directly saying that all of the casino jobs are not important, and that the revenue to the State is more important.

As our elected legislators, I have great admiration for the work you do. 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 and customers away from brick-and-mortar casinos. In turn, this will severely impact our members' jobs and financial stability.

I urge you to vote against House Bill 1255.

Respectfully,

**Shane Sterry
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