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**Written Testimony Submitted to the
Maryland House Ways and Means Committee
HB 1343
Internet Gaming - Authorization and Implementation
March 5, 2026
UNFAVORABLE**

Good afternoon, Chair Wilkens, Vice Chair Feldmark, and members of the House Ways and Means Committee. AFT-Maryland is the state federation for a number of public K-12 education, public higher education, and public employee unions in our state, representing over 20,000 employees in the Baltimore Teachers Union, county and municipal government employees in multiple regions, the full-time faculty at eight of the state's community colleges, and four different state employees unions, including the Maryland Professional Employees Council (MPEC), the union representing state employees employed by the Maryland Lottery and Gaming Control Agency (MLGCA). On behalf of these workers, and especially the state employees in MPEC working as regulators for the MLGCA in our state's brick-and-mortar casinos, AFT-Maryland calls for an unfavorable report to HB 1343.

The proliferation of internet gaming poses a threat to our state's brick-and-mortar casinos, which operate as a place for good paying jobs for residents of our state. AFT-Maryland members, as regulators for these brick-and-mortar locations, will not be immune to these threats; the closing of these casinos due to reduced traffic will in turn mean that fewer state regulators will be needed to be located in those casinos for enforcement of state laws and regulations.

Online gambling sites are additionally more difficult to regulate as well. Many states such as Delaware, Michigan, and West Virginia report regulatory compliance issues when expanding to internet gambling. As many of these internet gambling corporations operate outside of Maryland, and in some cases, outside of the United States, compliance to basic state laws and standards to protect Marylanders cannot be guaranteed.

For these reasons, AFT-Maryland calls for an unfavorable report to HB 1343. Thank you.