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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 28, 2020

**Testimony of Senator Antonio Hayes in Support of SB 69:
Baltimore City- Alcohol Beverages- Class A-7 Licenses- Surveillance System**

Chairman Pinsky and Members of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee,

Current law authorizes the Baltimore City Board of License Commissioners to issue a Class A-7 beer, wine, and liquor license. The license authorizes the holder to sell, for off-premises consumption, beer, wine, and liquor at retail at the place described in the license on Monday through Sunday from 9 a.m. to 10 p.m. The board generally may not issue a Class A-7 license after July 1, 2020. **Senate Bill 69** extends the date after which the Baltimore City Board of License Commissioners may no longer issue a Class A-7 license from July 1, 2020, to July 1, 2022.

A license holder who holds a valid Class B-D-7 license, issued on or before July 1, 2018, may apply to the board to exchange the license for a Class A-7 license if the license holder first obtains approval by resolution of the Baltimore City Council. This legislation also repeals a specified authorization of the exchange of a Class B-D-7 license for a Class A-7 license in the 46th legislative district. The transferee of the license that is successfully transferred from the 3600 block of Fleet Street to the 5600 block of 17 Eastern Avenue may apply to the Board to exchange the license for a Class A-7 license for use at the Eastern Avenue location on or before July 1, 2022.

Senate Bill 69 alters the hours of sale for a Class A-7 license to be from 10 a.m. to midnight and requires a Class A-7 license holder to operate a digital surveillance system on the licensed premises. Privately-owned security cameras to deter criminal activity, provide evidence to prosecute offenders, and empowers more people to play an active role in reducing crime throughout the city. The Baltimore Police Department has been working with community and business leaders to increase use of this surveillance among store owners. The digital surveillance system required under the bill must be equipped with high-definition cameras that provide continuous, 24-hour video monitoring placed inside and outside the licensed

establishment. The cameras must be placed in such a way that the exterior and interior of each entryway and the cash register or till is monitored.

Video recorded from the surveillance system must be retained for at least seven days. In consultation with the Baltimore Police Department, the board must adopt regulations relating to digital surveillance on or before August 15, 2020.

Additionally, the bill has been amended according to the suggestions of the Baltimore Police Department. These amendments increase the potential effectiveness of the bill. Senate Bill 69 has been amended to require:

1. Applicable licensees to register with the Baltimore Police Department's CitiWatch Community Partnership;
2. Surveillance video to be retained for not less than 14 days;
3. The holder of the license to post signs on the interior and exterior of the establishment notifying individuals that they are being recorded;
4. The holder of the license to provide access to recorded video upon request of the Baltimore Police Department;
5. The Board of Liquor License Commissioners to develop regulations in consultation with the Baltimore Police Department on or before December 31, 2020; and
6. Expand the qualifying licenses to include Class A Beer, Wine and Liquor Licenses.

The bill as amended will create a meaningful opportunity for cooperation between small businesses and the Baltimore City Police Department. Additionally, it will provide an effective means of deterrence and evidence for criminal cases that arise.

Thus, I urge a favorable report on Senate Bill 69.

Respectfully,



Senator Antonio L. Hayes
Chair, Baltimore City Senate Delegation
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