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Budget and Taxation Committee
Chair, Capital Budget Subcommittee

Chair, Senate Democratic Caucus

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony of Senator Craig J. Zucker
Senate Bill 734 - Transportation - Highways - Tourist Area and Corridor Signage
Program
Finance Committee
March 8, 2023
1:00PM
Position: Favorable with Amendment

Good afternoon, Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and distinguished members of the committee. It is my pleasure to testify today in **support** of **Senate Bill 734 - Transportation - Highways - Tourist Area and Corridor Signage Program**.

Maryland currently runs a Tourist Area and Corridor (TAC) Signing Program through the Maryland Department of Transportation State Highway Administration (MDOT SHA) in partnership with the Maryland Department of Commerce (Commerce).

Senate Bill 734 codifies TAC and has a one-time mandated appropriation of \$350,000 from the Transportation Trust Fund for Fiscal Year 2025 to assist with fabrication and installation of signs, and to clear out the backlog of signage requests.

This bill mostly keeps the TAC program the same, but with the offered amendment, it will add breweries and distilleries to the eligible attractions for signing with a generic symbol. This is consistent with how wineries are already treated in the TAC program. The generic symbol and criteria for brewery and distillery eligibility will be determined by SHA and Commerce in consultation with a geographically diverse set of community stakeholders, including state leaders in the brewing and distilling industry, local elected officials, local economic development officials, and leaders in the tourism industry.

These road signs are crucial for businesses to attract new customers and grow their business overall. For these reasons, I urge a favorable report on Senate Bill 734. Thank you for your kind consideration.