



HB 178 & SB 497

STATE DESIGNATIONS

STATE SPIRIT - MARYLAND RYE

POSITION: SUPPORT

BILL SUMMARY:

This legislation would designate Maryland Rye or Maryland Rye Whiskey as the State Spirit.

RATIONALE FOR PASSING THIS LEGISLATION:

- I. Maryland has had a long history and tradition of distilling various forms of whiskey since before the American Revolution;
- II. Maryland Rye Whiskey is a distinct and notable spirit unique from other distilled whiskey;
- III. Maryland Rye Whiskey demanded national respect as one of the best 22 whiskeys in the United States in the 19th and early 20th centuries;
- IV. Rye is a plentiful, locally grown crop affording an opportunity to highlight local agriculture and support local spirits production;
- V. The Maryland distillery industry, once a robust and significant producer of spirits, is again growing and contributing to the economy and prominence of the State;
- VI. Numerous Maryland distilleries are producing rye whiskey, often selecting locally grown, and sometimes malted, rye as the main rye ingredient;
- VII. Local farmers and malting operations will benefit from an increased opportunity to provide rye and malted rye directly to this manufacturing sector;
- VIII. Maryland Rye will attract tourists from the state, the region, the country and the world, much like the bourbon industry has impacted Kentucky.

NOTABLE INDUSTRY STATISTICS:

According to the Value-Added Agriculture in Maryland Economic Analysis (2020), the members that make up the Maryland Alcohol Manufacturers:

- Represent over 275 breweries, distilleries and wineries.
- Have an annual economic impact of \$3.4 billion and generate \$52 million/year in tax revenue.
- Support over 8,500 jobs in the manufacturing, agriculture, tourism and hospitality industries.