



**2024 SESSION  
POSITION PAPER**

**BILL:** SB 186 – Prince George’s County- Alcoholic Beverages- - Cigar Lounge License

**COMMITTEE:** Senate – Finance Committee

**POSITION:** Letter of Opposition

**BILL ANALYSIS:** SB 186 would establish a Class B-CL (cigar lounge) beer, wine, and liquor license in Prince George's County; exclude the license from certain distance restrictions; and exclude a certain business that operates in the county under the license from the requirements of the Clean Indoor Air Act.

**POSITION RATIONALE:** The Maryland Association of County Health Officers (MACHO) opposes the enactment of SB 186 on the grounds that it would set a statewide precedent for circumventing the Clean Indoor Air Act (CIAA). By creating a new classification of businesses that is exempt from the CIAA, the Cigar Lounge License reverse engineers a path for businesses to reinstate smoking in bars. There is also no logical reason this model couldn’t be extended to allow cigar lounges to serve food and essentially reinstate smoking in restaurants.

The Maryland Clean Indoor Air Act has been extremely successful not only in protecting workers from the harms of second-hand smoke, including permanent lung damage and cancer risks, it has also helped change societal norms regarding the acceptability of smoking with most residents now accepting and expecting smoke free environments to be the norm. It is now recognized that part of the decrease in smoking over the past 15 years is due to changes in societal acceptance of smoking in bars and restaurants<sup>1,2</sup>.

Creating a new exception to the CIAA will set Maryland back in terms of workplace protections and societal perception of risk from tobacco products.

For these reasons, the Maryland Association of County Health Officers opposes SB 186. For more information, please contact Ruth Maiorana, MACHO Executive Director at [rmaioral@jhu.edu](mailto:rmaioral@jhu.edu) or 410-937-1433. *This communication reflects the position of MACHO.*

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0091743520301225?via%3Dihub>  
<sup>2</sup> <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0091743519302063>