

Written Testimony in Favor of HB621 FY2025 3.20.20

Uploaded by: Jack Graham

Position: FAV

Honorable Maryland Senators,

I write to you today in support of legislation to reduce the fee for the Stadium Liquor License in Harford County. The Aberdeen IronBirds, a well-established business and community partner in Aberdeen and Harford County, have been paying four to five times as much for our liquor license as other Maryland minor league stadiums during their 22 years of operation, and now seek parity for our license fee.

We are requesting a reduction in the fee for this license from \$10,000 to \$4,000, still significantly more than other stadiums with similar licenses. This reduction in fees will assist the IronBirds with the ongoing challenges of inflation, labor costs, and other associated costs with operating their business, and continue to support other businesses, non-profits, and citizens in Aberdeen and Harford County. We hope you will review the comparison of our license to other minor league stadium licenses throughout Maryland provided below as evidence of our disproportionate fee structure, and consider our request.

Maryland Minor League Stadium Licenses:

- Harford County
 - Stadium Capacity: ~6,000 for baseball games
 - \$10,000 fee
 - **Beer, Wine, and Liquor** able to be served during baseball games
 - The license holder may sell, serve, or allow the consumption of beer, wine, and liquor on the stadium parking lots *only with the prior written approval of the Board.*
- Prince George's County
 - Stadium Capacity: ~10,000 for baseball games
 - \$2,420 fee
 - **Beer, Wine, and Liquor** able to be served (amended to include liquor during the 2023 session under HB438)
 - Liquor Board employee answered the phone and indicated that a special event in the parking lot can be granted with a letter to be reviewed by the board with a plan to safely operate alcohol sales in the parking lot or areas adjacent to the stadium.
- Wicomico County
 - Stadium Capacity: ~5,200 for baseball games
 - \$2,000 fee
 - Beer and Wine
 - "to an individual present at any event held at the stadium."
 - In a phone call to the Wicomico County Liquor License Department on January 11th, 2024, an employee stated that the Shorebirds have previously been permitted, at no fee, to operate alcohol sales in the parking lot at no additional fee. The GM of the baseball team confirmed that this has been permitted on a regular basis annually.
- Charles County
 - Stadium Capacity: ~4,200 for baseball games
 - \$2,200 fee
 - "The license authorizes the license holder to sell **beer, wine, and liquor** on the premises of a baseball stadium owned or operated by the county to individuals present at a baseball game or other event held at the stadium."

- “The license authorizes the license holder to sell beer, wine, and liquor **on the premises of a baseball stadium** owned or operated by the county to individuals present at a baseball game or other event held **at** the stadium.”
 - Does not specify that the parking lots are not explicitly considered part of the premises for service and consumption; a call was placed with no immediate answer on permission to the board.
- Frederick County (Keys/Ghost Hounds)
 - Stadium Capacity: ~5,400 for baseball games
 - \$2,000 fee
 - Beer and Wine
 - Can receive a Special Event request with diagram, alcohol plan, details of the event, and get permission from the board at no fee to serve in the parking lot
 - **Legislation was being considered at the time of this writing to allow liquor/spirits consumption under the license**

Thank you for your consideration of our support.

Signed,



Jack A. Graham
General Manager
Aberdeen IronBirds
Aberdeen, Harford County

Finance Committee HB621.pdf

Uploaded by: Teresa Reilly

Position: FAV

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CHAIR

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THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401
HARFORD COUNTY DELEGATION

March 19, 2024

Honorable Senator Pamela Beidle
Chair
Finance Committee
3 East
Miller Senate Building
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: HB 621 – Harford County- Alcoholic Beverages- Stadium License Annual Fee

Dear Chair Pamela Beidle,

House Bill 621 Harford County – Alcoholic Beverages – Stadium License Annual Fee, aims to reduce the annual fee from \$10,000 to \$4,000. The compelling evidence provided by Delegate Steve Johnson had shed light on the importance of aligning the fee with those in Prince George's, Wicomico, Charles, and Frederick counties. After vigorous discussion the House Delegation overwhelmingly supported this Harford County Delegation Bill.

Ripken Stadium was the only stadium of its nature when the previous bill from 2002 increased the fee from \$5,000 to \$10,000. To date with the proven data the Delegation feels it is important to ensure the fee is fair and comparable to those in neighboring counties.

We respectfully ask for a favorable report from the Finance Committee.

Sincerely,

Delegate Teresa E. Reilly
Chair of the Harford County Delegation