

Chairman Carey and Delegates:

Re: Bill HB714-AAC-Alcoholic Beverages-Gift Basket Permit

Thank you for hearing my testimony and considering this bill, along with the following:

- The US Floral and Gifting market is growing at a compound annual growth rate of 6% from 2017 - 2023, however much growth is attributed to innovations in the delivery model by eliminating retail stores and leveraging digital platforms. Independently owned, local brick and mortar floral retailers have been on the decline over the past decade
<https://www.researchandmarkets.com/reports/4538711/us-floral-gifting-market-industry-outlook-and>
- Successful independent brick-and-mortar floral retail locations in major markets have added alcoholic beverages to their product offerings, in order to attract new clients and enhance the gifting experience with luxury gift assortments that include wine, beer, and spirits.
- Florists in Baltimore County have worked within their jurisdictions laws to offer these items and services for purchase and delivery within Baltimore County
- Nationwide, there are abundant retailers that can ship wine and gift assortments to most states, which drives consumers to the internet for luxury gift purchases instead of local businesses for gift needs.
- There is not currently a liquor license available in Anne Arundel County that would permit a florist to operate in this market space
- The bill in question:
 - Provides a solution that allows local AACO floral and gift retailers to compete with internet businesses, sustaining locally owned businesses
 - Provides a new offering in AACO- a luxury gifting experience that is a stimulus to the economy, an upscale retail amenity, and an exciting gift option that is already available in other major metropolitan markets
 - Provides a solution that benefits both floral shops, as well as alcoholic beverage licensees by eliminating any perceived competition. The ability for florists to offer alcoholic beverage gift assortments creates a new market and new demand for wine, beer, and spirits that is currently not being maximized by either type of retail operation

Christine Guenther

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Some sample photos:

