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Chairman Davis, Vice Chair Dumais, and Members of the Economic Matters Committee:

HB1046: Alcoholic Beverages - Class MD License

Maryland's 94 breweries, 25 distilleries and over 80 wineries provide a significant effect on the overall health of Maryland Economy. Not only do they produce beer, wine, and distilled spirits that are consumed locally, these products are exported out of state and outside the United States creating jobs and revenue for the state of Maryland and its citizens. Additionally, they enhance and help to create a tourist economy.

A University of Massachusetts study confirmed that people want to purchase and consume products that are tied to the geography in which they are located or visiting. This can be seen in souvenir shops, potteries, art galleries, and increasingly, farm-to-table restaurants and craft breweries, wineries, and distilleries.

The Class MD license would allow for someone to open a restaurant or tavern without census requirements, if that person served only Maryland-made craft beer, wine, or distilled spirits. It would allow for on-site consumption only.

This bill looks to promote Maryland alcohol products by allowing a business qualifying for a Class MD license to exclusively sell beer, wine, and liquor that has been produced by a Maryland manufacturer. It would expand the retail footprint of Maryland craft alcohol manufacturers by having those products additionally be sold in new business that open with or obtain a Class MD License.

This license would be of interest in high-tourism areas, farm-to-table operations, and establishments that feature local music. The Class MD restaurant or tavern will be a Maryland experience devoted to promoting Maryland culture, artists, history, and agriculture.

I request a favorable committee report on this bill because it will be good for business and good for the Maryland.

Respectfully,

Delegate Kenneth P. Kerr
District 3B – Frederick County