

February 17, 2020

HB1319 – Salisbury Board of License Commissioners

Honored Delegates of the Maryland General Assembly:

Over the past five years the City of Salisbury has been on a journey that has focused on modernizing the structure and operations of our government. Realigning departments and tasks has helped us create an environment that expects and is seeing results in streamlining services and processes for our constituents and those seeking to provide goods and services to our constituents and the surrounding communities. Salisbury is the center of and the driving force of the economy on the Eastern Shore and the Delmarva Peninsula and we take that responsibility very seriously. We have worked diligently to create an atmosphere that is friendly and conducive to starting and growing businesses in the City of Salisbury.

In looking at the structure and era that our current laws, with regards to alcohol, were created, we believe that it is time to make an additional realignment at the local level. The City of Salisbury currently has no voice on the existing board through appointments or processes that are executed with the granting of or renewing of alcohol licenses for businesses and events within the City of Salisbury. We believe that by sending this process to the municipal level in the City of Salisbury, this will afford the current board and Wicomico County to focus on economic development in other areas of the County and to work with the remaining municipalities more closely.

In presenting the legislation before you today, we are requesting the Maryland General Assembly through HB1319 to support the creation of the Salisbury Board of License Commissioners. This is in no way requesting the abolishment of any Wicomico County or State of Maryland level body, this is simply realigning the authority of issuing Alcohol License within the municipal boundaries of the City of Salisbury from the current commission, which is appointed by the Governor, to one appointed by the Mayor of Salisbury and confirmed by the Salisbury City Council.

This would continue our stated goal of realigning tasks and processes and this item would add a process into our One Stop Shop for businesses within the City of Salisbury. With over 85% of the Alcohol License in Wicomico County being issued within Salisbury city limits, we believe this process is best suited to be included within the processes of our Business Development Department and reviewed, approved or denied by the Salisbury Board of License Commissioners.

We understand that a lot of work is being done in Annapolis this year and we appreciate your consideration of this piece of local legislation.

Muir W. Boda

Vice-President Salisbury City Council

President - Eastern Shore Association of Municipalities