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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 28th, 2020

**Testimony of Senator Antonio Hayes in Support of SB 935: Baltimore City -
Alcoholic Beverages - West North Avenue Corridor - Restrictions**

Chairman Pinsky and Members of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee,

In the past year, persistent illicit activity outside and around liquor establishments along West North Avenue has caused fear and concern amongst community members and organizations. Senate Bill 935 seeks to alleviate these concerns and reduce the level of unwarranted soliciting and loitering along the corridor by altering the hours of sale for specified alcoholic beverages licenses along the West North Avenue Corridor done already in other parts of Baltimore such as the Park Heights Community.

Current law allows the Baltimore City Board of License Commissioners to investigate police reports pertaining to liquor law violations and all public complaints, among other responsibilities. Senate Bill 935 seeks to act on the public complaints of the West North Avenue community by restricting the hours of operation of just 14 liquor stores along less than a mile of geography. This bill does not limit licenses and establishments with primary sales of food.

Senate Bill 935 would require alcoholic beverages licenses in the corridor to not begin the sale of wine, liquor, or beer until 10:00 a.m. or end after 10:00 p.m. There is expected to be no fiscal effect on local enforcement and a minimal effect on small business overall.

On Saturday, February 22, I held a Community Meeting and Forum at John Wesley United Methodist Church along the West North Avenue Corridor to discuss Senate Bill 935 with community members, representatives from the West North Avenue Liquor Board, the Baltimore Police Department, and liquor establishments along the corridor. The result of this forum affirmed the potential for this bill to resolve the safety concerns of residents, small businesses, and police who reside and operate in the area.

At its core, Senate Bill 935 is a public safety bill that will improve the West North Avenue community by making meaningful adjustments to the hours of operations of liquor stores located along the corridor.

Thus, I urge a favorable report on Senate Bill 935.

Respectfully,



Senator Antonio L. Hayes
Chair, Baltimore City Senate Delegation
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