

# THE MARYLAND COLLABORATIVE

TO REDUCE COLLEGE DRINKING AND RELATED PROBLEMS

Chair Maryland Senate Judicial Proceedings Committee  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Senator Smith:

We are writing to express our strong support of SB 209 allowing state law enforcement agencies to write a civil citation on the spot to the host of a loud and unruly house party. These types of “social host” ordinances – versions of which already exist at the local level in Baltimore City, College Park, Frostburg, Princess Anne, and part of Baltimore County – have been shown to reduce police calls for service and reduce excessive drinking and related problems. Large house parties often provide underage people easy access to alcohol and include underage drinking, large crowds blocking a right-of-way, public drunkenness, or other conduct that disturbs the peace. As members of the Maryland Collaborative to Reduce College Drinking and Related Problems, and as leaders of colleges and universities across the state, we work together using the best available research-based evidence to address the significant public health problem of excessive college drinking. Social host ordinances have been shown to be a particularly effective tool to address problems from large house parties where underage drinking occurs.

Loud and unruly parties negatively impact students in Maryland. Maryland college students who drank at an off-campus house party in the past month were three times more likely to injure someone, damage property, perform poorly on a test or project, or get in trouble with campus police, compared to those who did not. They were also twice as likely to miss class and get in trouble with off-campus police, and more than 1.5 times as likely to ride with a drinking driver, experience sexual misconduct, or have unprotected sex<sup>1</sup>. In 2019, nearly one in ten Maryland college students have suffered assaults or property damage due to someone else’s drinking<sup>2</sup>. These loud and unruly off-campus parties also disturb neighbors with excessive noise, public urination, vandalism, littering, and large crowds blocking public streets and sidewalks.

Since 2015, the five local jurisdictions in Maryland that have adopted social host ordinances have seen significant results: two jurisdictions saw a 70% drop in complaint calls for excessive noise, and nearby campuses have seen a significant reduction in the number of students who report drinking at off-campus house parties and in the number of students who engage in binge

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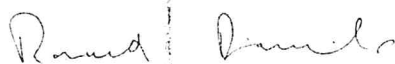
<sup>1</sup> Maryland Collaborative to Reduce College Drinking and Related Problems. High-risk drinking among college students in Maryland: Identifying targets for intervention; 2014.

<sup>2</sup> Maryland College Alcohol Survey (2019; Principal Investigator Amelia Arria). Unpublished data.

drinking. One jurisdiction saw a 63% reduction in the number of arrests in one student housing unit after adoption of a local social host law. We are pleased that such progress was made locally, and we hope that you will support this bill so that communities and campuses across Maryland can see similar improvements in the health and safety of students and communities.

Our state takes well-justified pride in its commitment to education. Our students come to college with high hopes and dreams; excessive drinking and its related harms can deter the fulfillment of those dreams. Please vote in favor of SB 209 and allow police to deter excessive drinking across Maryland.

Sincerely,



President Ronald J. Daniels  
Johns Hopkins University  
Co-Chair, Maryland Collaborative



President Kim E. Schatzel  
Towson University



President Cynthia Bambara  
Allegany College of Maryland



President Andrea E. Chapdelaine  
Hood College



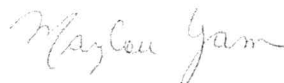
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Loyola University Maryland



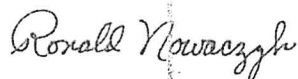
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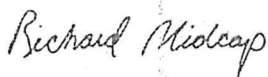
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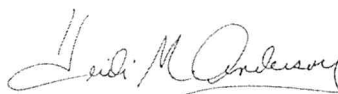
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