

March 3, 2021

SB 205 – Alcoholic Beverages- Sale or Delivery for Off Premises Consumption

I am asking you to support SB205/HB12 allowing restaurants, bars, and taverns to continue the temporary pandemic related ability granted by the Governor's Executive Order, to offer alcoholic beverages to customers along with prepared food purchases in a safe and lawful manner for carryout and delivery.

The sale of alcohol has always been a necessary component of profit margins for restaurants and bars with alcohol licenses. Allowing the off-premises sale during the pandemic has been a lifeline keeping many of these small businesses alive.

Even before COVID there was growing consumer demand for the convenience of foodservice carryout and delivery. The growth of online and app-based ordering has had a positive impact on restaurant and bar operations which operate on razor-thin profit margins typically between 4-6%.

Updating Maryland laws to reflect changes to consumer preferences protects the investment that businesses make in alcohol licenses.

Many of our restaurants are holding on by a string. Now they have to pay to renew their liquor licenses, restaurant license and the have to pay taxes on the worst year they ever had.

The hospitality industry has been gravely impacted by the pandemic and those businesses that survive will require three to four years to recover from the losses of the pandemic related closures. Allowing the temporarily granted ability to become permanent will aid their survival and help them recover in the future.

The second reason is that consumers want the convenience of picking up a bottle of wine with their Wednesday night spaghetti, or a six pack of beer with their Thursday takeout barbeque, or a margarita with their Friday night fajitas. Hospitality is different in 2021 than it was in 1980 and it is time to modernize our liquor law in Maryland to allow restaurants to adapt to changing consumer preferences.

They need your continues support till this is over.

Thank you and I ask for a favorable report for SB205

Nancy Hafford
Executive Director
Towson Chamber of Commerce, Inc.
44 West Chesapeake Ave
Towson Maryland 20204
410-825-1144