

SB489BeidleTestimony.pdf

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Position: FAV

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Finance Committee

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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 5, 2020

Senate Bill 489
Anne Arundel County - Alcoholic Beverages - Class MT License

Chairman Pinsky, Vice Chair Kagan, and members of the Education, Health & Environmental Affairs Committee;

Thank you for the opportunity to introduce **Senate Bill 489 - Anne Arundel County - Alcoholic Beverages - Class MT (Movie Theater) License**. This Bill creates a new beer and wine license, Class MT. This new license will allow movie theaters to sell alcoholic beverages in Anne Arundel County. SB 489 stipulates the MT license will only allow movie theaters to serve alcohol in single serve containers by patrons having purchased a ticket for a movie during normal hours of business, no later than midnight. It also requires movie theaters to serve alcohol from a separate counter from where normal movie theater concessions are sold. The license will cost \$1,200 and the license holder will not need to obtain a separate Sunday license.

There are several amendments proposed with the bill:

- changes the purpose paragraph
- requires alcohol purchased on premises may not be removed from the licensed premise.
- limits each patron to two servings of beer or wine per day.
- requires movie theaters to renew any alcoholic beverage license they currently hold with the MT license.

This license is something movie theaters have been asking for. It is common sense and it will be good for business in our county.

I ask the Committee to please give SB 489 as amended a favorable report.

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Uploaded by: Masher, Joseph

Position: FWA



March 3, 2021

My name is Joseph Masher, and I am the COO of Bow Tie Cinemas. We operate two movie theater locations in Anne Arundel County – at the Westfield Annapolis Mall and the other at the Annapolis Harbour Center.

At our Westfield Mall location in Annapolis, we applied for and were granted the privilege of an Alcoholic Beverage License (“Class H”) by the Anne Arundel County Liquor Board with a unanimous vote. We have held this license since 2019 and are in the process of renewal for 2021.

We have operated very safely in accordance with the law and have had zero incidents and no complaints to the Liquor Board. Our guests view alcohol service as an amenity, and people do not come to a movie theater to ‘drink’. All our managers hold Alcohol Awareness Certificates as promulgated by Article 2B, subsection 4-505 of the Annotated Code of Maryland.

For most of 2020 and part of this year, our theater remained closed due to the pandemic. We are operating at reduced capacity and are barely hanging on.

I recently became aware of HB0679, a bill concerning the creation of an “MT” license for alcoholic beverage service in movie theaters. It passed the house before we were able to submit testimony or apply to speak as a witness.

I am writing to ask that we, as currently operating under all terms and conditions of a “Class H” license, not be forced to change the class of our license to the “MT” license, if the Senate passes it. The financial impact on our already severely damaged business would be insurmountable. In 2018-2019, we spent over \$4 million on renovations at that theater, and our guests have grown accustomed to the amenities we provide.

In short, I am not opposed to the creation of a specific movie theater license, as long as we can still retain our “Class H” License.

Respectfully submitted,

Joseph Masher