

February 17, 2022

House Bill 356

Marshelle Burgess

My name is Marshelle Burgess. I represent Rip's Country Inn, located at the intersection of Route 301 and 197 Bowie, Maryland. Rip's has been serving Prince George's County since 1952. We employ seventy-five employees currently, who receive good benefits. There are several employees who have been with Rip's for more than 20 years and many more with ten years' worth of service. We are a community driven business and believe in giving back to the community. We support local schools, sports team, churches to list a few. We spend money every year on up keep to the facility with local vendors for refrigeration, heating, air conditioning, flooring, signage, equipment, etc. We have thousands of customers who are opposed to the idea of wine and beer in the grocery stores last year and signed the petition to support local business.

This bill would hurt the business at Rip's Country Inn to the point it may have to close. It will definitely change the employee base. There are several grocery stores within a mile from Rip's.

As amended by the Delegation, the bill would allow an unlimited number of beer and wine licenses to be issued to "grocery stores" in a certain Senatorial districts (Districts 24 and 47, and parts of District 25.)

In 2021, this legislation was centered around "food deserts" and attempting to direct supermarkets to those areas. There is no longer any relation to "food desert."

The limitation on the certain senatorial districts does not limit the impact of the bill. A license near the edge of one district can have substantial impact in another.