



Worcester County Office of Tourism

104 West Market Street | Snow Hill MD 21863 | (410) 632-3110 | [www.VisitMarylandsCoast.org](http://www.VisitMarylandsCoast.org)

February 17, 2022

**SUPPORT HB1123- Worcester County- Alcoholic Beverages- Class L License**

Dear Chair Wilson, Vice Chair Crosby and Distinguished Members of the Economic Matters Committee:

On behalf of the Worcester County Commissioners and the Office of Tourism and Economic Development, I respectfully request your support of HB1123, which would establish a Class L beer, wine and liquor license in Worcester County; authorizing the Board of License Commissioners to issue the license to a holder of a manufacturer's license; specifying that the license authorizes the license holder to sell or provide samples of certain beer, wine, and liquor for on-premises consumption under certain circumstances; providing the hours of sale are the same as those for the underlying manufacturer's license; and establishing an annual license fee of \$250.

This bill would immensely benefit our small rural alcohol manufacturers and is whole heartedly supported by our county commissioners, county administration and our local manufacturers. This is one of a number of efforts to propel the Agritourism industry in Worcester County which has become extremely popular, especially since the pandemic, allowing local on-farm producers and local manufacturers to diversify their offerings and create new revenue streams. The manufacturer would still need to apply for the license through the Worcester Liquor Control Board, thus ensuring a check and balance system locally. The business would then carry the Class L with their Maryland state manufacturing license.

This license, if issued, would allow the business to offer other Maryland made manufacturers products along with their own. Under current state-issued manufacturing licenses, they cannot offer any products other than their own. So currently, a local craft brewery cannot offer to serve or sample Maryland-made wine, mead, cider or spirits or even another craft beer. For our existing on farm manufacturers, this would alleviate the pressure of having to solely respond to current demands of the customers. The ability to offer other Maryland-made products to those guests that may not have typically been exposed to such offerings expands the business's appeal, thus attracting more diverse visitors and patrons. It is also an opportunity to attract guests from other states to experience various Maryland-made products in one setting, noting that all products must be consumed on site so this doesn't compete with a retail operation. For example, it would give Windmill Creek Winery in Berlin additional Maryland wines to offer guests while easing production issues with the current grape shortage. In addition, if an event such as a wedding is held on premises, the business currently cannot allow any other product other than what they produce at the event (e.g. for a winery, there is no ability to provide Maryland-made beer, cider or spirits without a Class L, thus limiting the selection for the guests). Class L license would also enable a farm brewery like Sinepuxent Brewing the ability to offer a guest beer tap from another Maryland brewery, and alleviate the heavy cost of expansion during a difficult supply chain crisis.

With the county's goal of growing agricultural tourism, I believe this will help tremendously by allowing Worcester County to issue a Class L license. Therefore, I respectfully request a favorable report for HB1123.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration and kindly feel free to reach out o me directly with any questions at all.

Sincerely,

Melanie Pursel, M.S  
Director  
Worcester County Office of Tourism and Economic Development