



Mission: To improve public health in Maryland through education and advocacy Vision: Healthy Marylanders living in Healthy Communities

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**SB 1000 Harford County – Alcoholic Beverages – Class L License**  
**Committee: EHEA**  
**Position: Unfavorable**

The Maryland Public Health Association (MdPHA) would like to offer unfavorable testimony regarding SB 1000, a bill to create a new Class L license in Worcester County.

Over the past few years, the public health community has witnessed the steady unraveling of the three-tier system of alcohol licensing and regulation, with much of the pressure through actions of the craft beverage industry. Public health is supportive of small business, but it must be balanced with the appropriate licensing, regulatory, and enforcement structures that are necessary for the particular product being manufactured and/or sold.

The creation of a class L license in Harford County must be considered not in isolation, but in the context of how this would affect the regulatory structure across the state and of alcohol in general. Over the past few years, and particularly during the past two years of the pandemic, regulations have been relaxed to allow manufacturers of alcoholic beverages to sell these products directly to the public.

On its face, this bill essentially turns a manufacturer into a de facto bar, thus significantly creeping again across the 3-tier system. This blurring of the scope of practice between a manufacturer and a retailer has not gone unnoticed and is not supported by the public health frame of alcohol regulation.

We urge an unfavorable report on bill SB 1000.

*The Maryland Public Health Association (MdPHA) is a nonprofit, statewide organization of public health professionals dedicated to improving the lives of all Marylanders through education, advocacy, and collaboration. We support public policies consistent with our vision of healthy Marylanders living in healthy, equitable, communities. MdPHA is the state affiliate of the American Public Health Association, a nearly 145-year-old professional organization dedicated to improving population health and reducing the health disparities that plague our state and our nation.*