

Testimony in Support of SB 603

Constitutional Amendment – Beer and Wine Licenses – Retail Grocery Establishments

March 3, 2022

To: Hon. Paul Pinsky, Chair, and members of the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee

From: Kayla Mock, Political Organizer
United Food and Commercial Workers Union, Local 400

Chair Pinsky and members of the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee, I appreciate the chance to share my testimony on behalf of our over 10,000 members in Maryland, working on the front lines of the ongoing pandemic in grocery, retail, food distribution, law enforcement, and health care. Through collective bargaining, our members raise the workplace standards of wages, benefits, safety, and retirement for all workers. Union members are critical to the addressing inequality and uplifting the middle class.

We strongly support SB 603 and urge you to vote it favorably.

We appreciate the opportunity for the voters of Maryland to have their voices heard on this issue.

If passed, this amendment will be a revenue generator for the state at a time when Maryland needs it and it will create hundreds of new, well paid, family supporting, union jobs.

Our economy needs a boost and expanding beer and wine sales to chain grocery stores, like Giant, Safeway, and Shoppers, where our members work, will help drive a much-needed recovery and keep Maryland in a strong economic position going forward. If beer and wine sales are approved by the Maryland voters, it would provide a real opportunity for the state to **create up to 300 full time jobs for our members**. These will be union jobs with family sustaining wages and benefits that will increase our tax base and strengthen our communities and our state for the long term.

For these reasons, we urge a favorable vote on Senate Bill 603.