



CITY OF HAVRE DE GRACE

OFFICE OF THE MAYOR

William T. Martin

April 1, 2022

The Honorable Paul G. Pinsky
Chair, Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
2 West
Miller Senate Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

RE: FAVORABLE - HB 667 – Harford County - Alcoholic Beverages - Class B Beer, Wine, and Liquor Licenses - Restaurants

Chairman Pinsky and the honorable members of the Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee:

Harford County is the ONLY jurisdiction in the State of Maryland, which requires an applicant for a Class B beer, wine, and liquor license to wait 6 months before they are eligible to serve liquor.

This unnecessary waiting period increases the difficulty of attracting new restaurants to Harford County and ultimately puts the county at a competitive disadvantage with neighboring counties.

On February 7, 2022, the Mayor and City Council of Havre de Grace voted to take a favorable position on House Bill 667. HB 667 is a common-sense pro-business bill that, if passed, would repeal the requirement that a restaurant applying for a Class B beer, wine, and liquor license in Harford County must have been in full-time operation for the 6 months prior to filing the application.

The City of Havre de Grace is a historic waterfront community located in Harford County. The current city administration has made significant strategic investments and policy decisions in the areas of tourism and economic development, which has allowed Havre de Grace to gain recognition as a 21-century tourist destination. Part of this strategy includes recruiting new restaurants, many of whom are hesitant to locate in our jurisdiction due to the unnecessary waiting period that HB 667 will eliminate.

Restaurants face uncontrollable, unpredictable, and volatile markets and economic circumstances, which have been exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic and the concurrent economic crises. In the

current unpredictable times, lawmakers should eliminate unnecessary laws that can impede a business's ability to open, grow and expand.

The City of Havre de Grace respectfully requests the committee give HB 667 a favorable report.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "William T. Martin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

William T. Martin
Mayor, City of Havre de Grace