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DEPUTY MAJORITY WHIP

Budget and Taxation Committee

Subcommittees

Vice Chair, Capital Budget

Pensions

Chair, Public Safety, Transportation,
and Environment



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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 603

Constitutional Amendment – Beer and Wine Licenses – Retail Grocery Establishments

Dear Chairman Pinsky and Members of the
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee:

I write to urge you to **support** Senate Bill 603. The question of whether Maryland should allow the purchase of beer and wine in retail grocery stores and supermarkets is one that should be reviewed by the Legislature but decided by the constituents that this effort will inevitably benefit.

Senate Bill 603 proposes a constitutional amendment that, if approved by the voters at the November 2022 general election, would authorize Maryland's retail grocery stores to obtain a license granting sale of beer and wine to individuals who are 21 years old and older. Inasmuch, The General Assembly will be required to develop a framework to regulate and govern the issuance of the licenses. In efforts to establish resources in neighborhoods that lack access to food options, the General Assembly is directed to prioritize the issuance of licenses for establishments that are in areas that experience scarcity in healthy, sustainable food choices.

Currently, forty-seven states and the District of Columbia allow retail grocery stores and supermarkets to sell beer, and forty states and the District of Columbia allow the sale of wine. If successful, beginning on July 1, 2024, the State of Maryland will join these states. By authorizing alcohol sales in the suggested venues, the State of Maryland will bolster economic benefits that support constituents within communities in need.

I am hopeful that the amendment to the Maryland Constitution proposed in Senate Bill 603 will be submitted to the qualified voters of Maryland at the November 2022 general election.

For the aforementioned reasons, I respectfully request a favorable report of Senate Bill 603.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Cory V. McCray".

Cory V. McCray

State Senator, 45th District