



Maryland General Assembly
Maryland Senate Finance Committee
Annapolis, MD - March 29, 2022

Testimony from LaWann Stribling, Strib'ble District LLC

Support with Amendments: Cottage Business Annual Pay Cap Increase - (HB178)

In April 2019 I learned that our bakery annual income has a cap of 25k. One year later in sitting in on townhall meetings since Covid made its appearance in 2020. Here I learned from emailing my delegate that the meeting is still up for discussion. I learned from Deborah that this law has been in place since the 1970s.

Covid has put us into a serious dilemma. What to buy or not to buy is the question. With the rising cost of houses my husband and I can't afford to purchase the family home we'd like for our 6 children. We did have that aspiration as the next goal to achieve prior to Covid when I began our family bakery business. As I would have liked to jump right out there into a cafe' I did not have access to capital to afford that luxury. I hit it from the ground up reading over all the information needed to know for Maryland businesses and food businesses.

The initial goal was to use my skills as a home baker and my knowledge and understanding of cannabis to create a processing business licensed under the State of Maryland Cannabis Commission. In 2019 when the application opened to apply I quickly jumped on the opportunity only to be faced with pure sadness. I didn't have the resources or money to have a facility up and set up to run prior to being approved.

From reading up on food business laws and cottage foods businesses I decided going the cottage business route would be best and what my family could afford. We opened up Strib'ble Treats Homemade Sweets in June 2019. In 2020 I began to participate in meetings and townhalls dealing with cottage businesses in Maryland, Prince George's County and the City of Greenbelt.

I believe me raising the question in 1 of those townhalls resparked the flame to request an increase in annual income for cottage foods businesses. As most of us, I surely do, aspire to grow more in business in this county and state. I'd request for our state to have a favorable response to HB178 with an amendment to increase the amount to \$75000 for the year. For

those of us who have been severely affected by the red lining of communities, lack of resources in our county and the war on drugs, this increase in pay for those affected ,would assist in addressing equity and reparative justice.

Thank you,

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