



Charles County Government

CHARLES COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Reuben B. Collins, II, Esq., *President*
Ralph E. Patterson, II, M.A., *Vice President*
Gilbert O. Bowling, III
Thomasina O. Coates, M.S.
Amanda M. Stewart, M.Ed.

Mark Belton
County Administrator

March 30, 2023

Bill: SB 519 – Charles County - Alcoholic Beverages - Unlicensed Establishments
Committee: House – Economic Matters
Position: FAVORABLE

Dear Chairman Wilson, Vice Chairman Crosby, and Members:

On behalf of the County Commissioners for Charles County, we support passage of SB 519.

SB 519 repeals the requirement that live entertainment be offered or provided by an unlicensed establishment in conjunction with the presence of alcoholic beverages in order to constitute a prohibited act in Charles County. This change would have the effect of making it a prohibited act for an unlicensed establishment to offer, sell, serve, keep, or allow to be consumed alcohol on their premises, regardless of the live entertainment being offered or provided.

This amendment is sought as a remedy to an ongoing problem of local law enforcement with businesses that do not hold a liquor license, and allow customers to bring and consume alcohol within their establishments. Law enforcement is frequently called to the same locations for complaints of criminal activity such as disorderly conduct and other alcohol related offenses. There is currently no mechanism to hold the business operator accountable for the misdeeds of its patrons or discourage consumption of alcohol at the premises, despite the premises being unlicensed, unless live entertainment is also present.

We believe this amendment will provide a deterrent to businesses that allow consumption of alcohol on their premises, and that cause other disturbances to the community. We encourage a favorable committee report on SB 519. Thank you for the opportunity to provide our full support.

Sincerely,

A blue ink signature of Reuben B. Collins, II, Esq., consisting of stylized initials and a surname.

Reuben B. Collins, II, Esq., President
County Commissioners of Charles County

cc: Charles County Delegation