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MINORITY LEADER

Finance Committee

Executive Nominations Committee

Rules Committee

Joint Committee on Legislative Ethics

Legislative Policy Committee



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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 24, 2023

The Honorable Brian J. Feldman
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

Dear Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee,

Senate Bill 497 designates Maryland Rye Whiskey as the State spirit. Maryland is finally rekindling its long history of rye production, with 15 distillers in the state using local rye grain to produce rye whiskey. Much like Kentucky is known for its Bourbon, Maryland is known as the producer of rye whiskey throughout the world. Major investments in rye farming and rye production have created a "rye whiskey trail", and the designation of Rye as the Spirit of Maryland would help us generate an economic impact to match the \$8.9 billion brought in by the Kentucky Bourbon trail annually.

I request a favorable vote on Senate Bill 497.