



Maryland Department of Agriculture

Office of the Secretary

Wes Moore, Governor

Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor

Kevin M. Atticks, Acting Secretary

Steven A. Connelly, Deputy Secretary

Agriculture | Maryland's Leading
Industry

The Wayne A. Cawley, Jr. Building

50 Harry S Truman Parkway

Annapolis, Maryland 21401

mda.maryland.gov

410.841.5885 Baltimore/Washington

410.841.5846 Fax

Maryland Department of Agriculture

Legislative Comment

Date: February 24, 2023

BILL NUMBER: SB 672

SHORT TITLE: ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES- USE OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES
FOR EDUCATIONAL PURPOSES

MDA POSITION: SUPPORT

The University of Maryland was approved to offer a Fermentation Science major that explores the application of fundamentals to understand fermentation for food and beverages.

The Fermentation Science major is a four-year course of study in which the first two years are dominated by foundational science and general education courses. Components of several of these fermentation science courses involve the students in the study, evaluation and production of alcoholic beverages. Specifically:

1. "Viticulture and Enology" – A scientific introduction to viticulture (grape-growing) and enology (winemaking).
2. "Brewing and Distilling" – A scientific introduction to beer production and distillation of spirits, and brewery and distillery operations.
3. "Fermentation Science Laboratory" – An introduction to the microbiology and biochemistry of fermentation and the biotechnology involved in the production of fermented foods, beverages, pharmaceuticals and biofuels.
4. "Sensory Analysis Laboratory" – Development of students' sensory evaluation skills (taste, smell, feel, etc.) and understanding the science behind food sensory perception.
5. "Experiential Learning" – Opportunities for industry-embedded internships.

Existing Maryland law prohibits students who are less than 21 years of age from enrolling in courses in which the students may have access to alcoholic beverages as part of the course instruction. Passage of this legislation would allow students to enroll in essential fermentation science courses that may provide limited access to alcoholic beverages prior to reaching 21 years of age. The student would be permitted limited access to alcoholic beverages for study, production, evaluation and tasting, but would not be permitted to consume or swallow any of the beverages.

MDA supports SB 672 and thanks you for your consideration of a favorable report.

If you have additional questions, please contact Steve Connelly, Deputy Secretary, at steve.connelly@maryland.gov or (410) 841-5881.