Support of SB 672 - Alcoholic Beverages – Use of A

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Position: FAV

Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

3358 Davidsonville Road • Davidsonville, MD 21035 • (410) 922-3426

February 24, 2023

To: Senate Finance Committee

From: Maryland Farm Bureau, Inc.

Re: **Support of SB 672 - Alcoholic Beverages – Use of Alcoholic Beverages for Educational Purposes**

On behalf of our Farm Bureau member families in Maryland, I submit this written testimony in support of SB 672. This bill authorizes college students who are at least 18 years old and under the age of 21 years to taste the alcoholic beverages while participating in a course or program in enology, fermenting, brewing, or hospitality and tourism offered by a qualified institution of higher education without criminal penalty to the student, instructor, or institution of higher education.

As the on-farm alcohol sector of agriculture continues to grow in Maryland, having the expertise to make these businesses work is essential. We thank the University of Maryland for adding the fermentation classes to their class offerings for college students. These classes prepare the next generation to take over the family operation and/or start new businesses over their own. Addressing this technicality brought forward in this bill is essential to generating the next generation of experts.

MARYLAND FARM BUREAU SUPPORTS SB 672 & REQUESTS A FAVORABLE REPORT

Colby Ferguson
Director of Government Relations
For more information contact Colby Ferguson at (240) 578-0396

SB672 UMD Testimony.pdf
Uploaded by: Craig Beyrouty
Position: FAV

University of Maryland
College of Agriculture and Natural Resources
1296 Symons Hall, 7998 Regents Drive
College Park, MD 20742

February 24, 2023

SB 672 - Alcoholic Beverages - Use of Alcoholic Beverages for Educational Purposes
Senate Finance Committee
Favorable

In 2021, the Maryland Higher Education Commission (MHEC) approved a new Bachelor of Science degree program in Fermentation Science to be offered at the University of Maryland College Park and at the Universities at Shady Grove. The Fermentation Science major explores the application of fundamental principles of the physical and biological sciences to understand the raw material inputs, the processes, and the final food and beverage products of fermentation. The science-based curriculum includes foundational courses in chemistry, biology, food science and plant science, with tracks focusing on viticulture, enology, brewing, cheese and dairy products, pharmaceuticals and biofuels. Through this program, the University of Maryland supports Maryland's workforce by providing graduates who have a solid foundation in the broad fermentation industries that include beverages (beer, wine, distilled spirits and kombucha), vegetable foods (kimchi, tempeh, and miso), dairy foods (cheese and yogurt) and biotechnology (biofuels and pharmaceuticals). Students learn not only about the fermentation process, but also about the agricultural production of grain, fruit, and flavor-enhancing plants. Graduates will be well prepared for career options in a variety of industries that use fermented products as their base.

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. In years three and four, students enroll in a series of specific courses that focus on various aspects of fermentation science. 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 the University of Maryland from allowing students who are less than 21 years of age from enrolling in courses in which the students may be exposed to or provided access to alcoholic beverages as part of the course instruction. Therefore, currently, students must delay enrolling in the five courses listed above until after they reach 21 years of age.

The average age of a first-year, first-semester freshman student at the University of Maryland is 18 years old. The average student will reach 21 years of age by the beginning of their seventh semester, or the first semester of their Senior year, or 4th year. Of course, some students are older than the average age and some are younger than the average age. Under current legal restrictions, the average student is forced to schedule all 5 of the courses in which they may have access to alcoholic beverages into the two semesters of the final Senior year, which is extremely difficult to accomplish. For the average-age student who cannot squeeze these 5 courses into their Senior year schedule, or for the student who is younger than the average-age, the current age restriction will force the student to delay graduation and extend their time enrolled at the University of Maryland. If the student must include a full 5th year of study in order to register for these courses, they would incur extra tuition cost of approximately $11,000 for Maryland residents and $39,000 for out-of-state students.

Passage of this legislation would allow students to enroll in essential fermentation science courses that may provide access to alcoholic beverages prior to reaching 21 years of age. As an officially registered student, the student would be permitted access to alcoholic beverages for study, production, evaluation and tasting, but would not be permitted to consume or swallow any of the beverages. Hence, this controlled practice is known as "sip & spit". Similar legislation exists in at least 14 other states.

Based on University of Maryland fermentation science course enrollment projections and the estimated age distribution of 3rd and 4th year students in the fermentation science major, it is estimated that the provisions provided by this legislation would beneficially impact 30 to 50 University of Maryland students per year.

Thank you for your consideration and we urge a favorable report on SB 672.

Dr. Craig Beyrouty
Dean and Director
College of Agriculture and Natural Resources
University of Maryland
College Park, MD
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BaltimoreCounty_FAV_SB0672.pdf
Uploaded by: Elisabeth Sachs
Position: FAV

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County Executive

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Director of Government Affairs

AMANDA KONTZ CARR
Legislative Officer

JOSHUA M. GREENBERG
Associate Director of Government Affairs

BILL NO.: **SB 672**

TITLE: Alcoholic Beverages - Use of Alcoholic Beverages for Educational Purposes

SPONSOR: Senator Klausmeier

COMMITTEE: Finance

POSITION: **SUPPORT**

DATE: February 24, 2023

Baltimore County **SUPPORTS** Senate Bill 672 - Use of Alcoholic Beverages for Educational Purposes. This legislation would authorize certain educational curricula relating to enology, fermentation, brewing, or hospitality and tourism.

Baltimore County cherishes the farm breweries and distillers which fuel its agritourism industry. Agritourism provides rural landmarks new strategies for driving traffic to their location and exciting opportunities for students who wish to enter the hospitality sector. As tourism continues to trend towards locally-sourced alcoholic beverages, enabling universities to provide a comprehensive education will benefit the student and the tourism industry as a whole.

Accordingly, Baltimore County requests a **FAVORABLE** report on SB 672. For more information, please contact Jenn Aiosa, Director of Government Affairs at jaiosa@baltimorecountymd.gov.

SB672_DeptAgriculture_FAV
Uploaded by: Emily Baldwin
Position: FAV

Maryland
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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.

SB672MeghanaKotraiahSGA_fav.pdf
Uploaded by: Meghana Kotraiah
Position: FAV

Committee: Finance Committee
Testimony on: SB672
Position: Favorable

23 February 2023

Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and the members of the Finance Committee,

The University of Maryland – College Park, Student Government Association supports SB672 that authorizes students participating in educational classes to taste alcoholic beverages in the classroom setting. As a student in the College of Agriculture and Natural Resources, and a student leader heavily involved around campus, I know this legislation will open up an important resource for students studying fermentation, agriculture, viticulture, agribusiness, and more.

Growing up, I spent a lot of time in the Montgomery County Agricultural Reserve, exploring agritourism based farms and vineyards. In high school, I worked for a small restaurant in my hometown that taught me about local agriculture and craft alcohol. From then on, I was immersed in learning about how my local economy depends on these sectors. The agriculture and alcohol industries are vital to the state. Having a bustling craft alcohol industry, the agritourism benefit of valued businesses like cideries, local breweries, and wine tours is highly impactful. This impacted my educational decisions, as I chose to major in Agricultural and Resource Economics, with the career goal of participating in the agriculture and natural resources policy-making process.

In college, I am writing my undergraduate thesis about the impacts of California wine country on social, political, and racial stratification in the region. I learn about the impacts of vineyards and wine making on the environment, on the economy, on the dynamics of the industry. The alcohol industry is growing, particularly in Maryland, and we will need educated students to participate in it and be the next generation of brewers, sommeliers, wine-makers, vineyard managers, and more. The fermentation science classes that this legislation will allow will educate this generation. As a student whose education has been directly impacted by related courses, experiential learning opportunities, and working for these businesses, I respectfully request a favorable report on SB672.

Thank you,

Meghana Kotraiah
Student Government Association, Speaker of the Legislature
University of Maryland — College Park
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