



*Susan O'Neill, Chair*

*Charlotte Davis, Executive Director*

Testimony in Support of  
Senate Bill 448 – Alcoholic Beverages – Manufacturer’s Licenses and Off-Site Permits  
Finance Committee  
Friday, February 24, 2023

**The Rural Maryland Council supports Senate Bill 448 – Alcoholic Beverages – Manufacturer’s Licenses and Off-Site Permits.** This bill will extend provisions of the Executive Order privileges put in place during the pandemic for the State’s wineries, breweries, and distillers to distribute their product. This bill will allow the holder of a manufacturer’s license to deliver their product to an individual located in the State and directly ship their product to a consumer upon request. This bill extends the termination dates for provisions of Chapters 359 and 360 of 2021 and Chapters 477 and 478 of 2022 related to the sale and delivery of alcoholic beverages by certain alcoholic beverages manufacturers from June 30, 2023, to June 30, 2025. The bill also delays the date, from July 1, 2023, to July 1, 2025, that specified license holders are authorized to sell up to 288 ounces of beer to a person at an off-site permitted event. The bill takes effect July 1, 2023.

Maryland’s distilleries, wineries, and breweries promote economic development, value-added agriculture, and manufacturing as they not only produce beverages but create destinations that attract tourists. According to data from the Value-Added Agriculture in Maryland by Grow & Fortify and the Business Economic and Community Outreach Network (BEACON) at Salisbury University, the combined value-added impact of these three industries was over \$1 billion in 2018, supporting more than 9,500 jobs, and adding an estimated \$52 million to state and local tax revenue. The pandemic greatly impacted this industry with close to 500 layoffs. The authorization for direct-to-consumer delivery and shipment services has created a new lifeline for sales and kept many doors open during these unprecedented times.

The Rural Maryland Council supports the value-added agriculture industry as it enables farms to transition into diversified production. SB448 further enhances this type of agriculture by providing delivery and shipping options for the State’s value-added craft beverages. The Council requests your favorable support of Senate Bill 448 - Alcoholic Beverages - Manufacturer’s Licenses and Off-Site Permits.

*The Rural Maryland Council (RMC) is an independent state agency governed by a nonpartisan, 40-member board that consists of inclusive representation from the federal, state, regional, county, and municipal governments, as well as the for-profit and nonprofit sectors. We bring together federal, state, county, and municipal government officials as well as representatives of the for-profit and nonprofit sectors to identify challenges unique to rural communities and to craft public policy, programmatic or regulatory solutions.*

**“A Collective Voice for Rural Maryland”**