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Education, Energy, and
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Executive Nominations Committee



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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

February 24, 2023

The Senate Finance Committee

SB 795 – Wicomico County – Alcoholic Beverages – Cigar Lounge License
Statement of Support by Bill Sponsor Senator Mary Beth Carozza

Thank you, Chair Griffith, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and the rest of the members of the eminent Senate Finance Committee for allowing me to present Senate Bill 795 – Wicomico County – Alcoholic Beverages – Cigar Lounge License as amended.

This is a local bill that would establish a Class B-CL beer, wine, and liquor license in Wicomico County and authorize the Wicomico County Board of License Commissioners to issue the license for use in a cigar lounge and only to customers who are seated on the premises of the cigar lounge. As amended, this bill also would restrict Wicomico County cigar lounges from selling food that is prepared on site.

As you know, a cigar lounge is a specialty business designed to provide individuals with a place where they can smoke cigars to relax, network, and visit with other individuals who appreciate this traditional niche product. Cigar smokers tend to smoke less than your average cigarette smoker, viewing it as a leisurely activity perfectly suitable for a lounge atmosphere.

These cigar lounges already operate in Wicomico and throughout the rest of Maryland and are already exempt from the indoor smoking restriction as cigar lounges are a retail business. This bill would simply allow cigar lounges in Wicomico County to become more traditional clubs by enabling the sale of alcohol to be enjoyed on the premises.

Traditional cigars are a very niche product, and therefore, the establishment of cigar lounges would be limited. As an example, Anne Arundel County has roughly six times the population of Wicomico County and only supports two cigar lounges.

This is a local bill intended to support local job growth for our small businesses in Wicomico County. Smaller counties like ours depend on growing our small business community to maintain our Shore way of life.

I truly appreciate your kind attention and consideration, and I respectfully ask for a swift and favorable report on SB 795.