



HB 246 & SB 322

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES

CLASS 04 LIMITED WINERY LICENSE - FOOD SERVICE

POSITION: SUPPORT

BILL SUMMARY:

1. This legislation **enables** wineries to serve food beyond what is currently permitted for a Class 04 Winery. Wineries could serve additional food if they become licensed to operate as a food establishment and meet the same food/alcoholic beverage sales as a class D beer and wine licensee in the local jurisdiction.
2. A sponsor amendment adds the word “**prepare**” to the current statute containing the list of foods that a winery can currently sell or serve. This should resolve a recent question from Carroll County as to whether a winery may “prepare” the foods that are enumerated in the statute. A thorough review of the legislative history (Winery Modernization Act of 2010) indicates that “preparation” of food was contemplated – and it is hard to imagine that chili, soup, or pizza would be served in a “non-prepared” manner. This language ensures that wineries that choose not to become food establishments may “prepare” the food that is already permitted under their current license.
3. Extends operating hours to 10:00 am to 10:00 pm without the need for a planned promotional event, or other organized activity.

RATIONALE FOR SUPPORTING HB 246 & SB 322:

Consumer expectations drive change in industries. Marylanders now expect a greater level of food service from our wineries – which they see when they visit wineries in other states. • Wineries are often located in more rural areas with fewer food establishment options. • The ability to offer a wider range of foods serves a two-fold benefit: 1) provides the public with a fuller customer service experience, and 2) offers a positive public health impact.

- Consumers would like a complete experience, including food and a meal paired with their Maryland-made wine.

This change will help further drive tourism and economic growth in our agricultural areas of

the state, where many of our Maryland wineries are located.

- This change would create more equity and consistency among Maryland's farm-based craft alcohol producers, since Class 8 Farm breweries already have access to on-premise food and 10:00 am to 10:00 pm operating hours.