



February 24, 2023

Senator Melony Griffith
Chair, Finance
3 East Miller Office Building
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: SB 854 - Alcoholic Beverages – Class A Licenses – Retail Grocery Establishments – FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENTS

Dear Chairwoman and Members of the Committee,

My name is Shelby Kemp. I am a Marketing Project Manager for Royal Farms Convenience Stores. Royal Farms main business includes convenience, fuel, and quick service restaurants. We are a third-generation family-owned business, headquartered in Baltimore city. We operate 172 stores in Maryland, employing 3,167 employees.

We strongly support having the ability to purchase a license to sell beer and wine in our stores. At Royal Farms, we strive to cater to our customers and provide them with what they want. Data points to the fact that customers want the ability to purchase beer and wine at their local convenience or grocery store. Recent public opinion polls continue to demonstrate that consumers strongly support the ability to purchase beer and wine in convenience stores. Maryland is one out of four states that does the purchase of beer and wine at convenience or grocery stores.

This legislation provides safeguards that convenience or grocery stores must be a certain distance from schools, residences, and places of worship. SB 854 also requires that stores be larger than 3,200 square feet. The bill also requires that stores that sell beer or wine offer certain foods and provide food and beverages to Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program recipients.

In conclusion, allowing convenience stores and grocery stores to apply for a license to sell beer and wine will benefit consumers, our economy, and our state. Please vote in favor of SB 854.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Shelby Kemp".

Shelby Kemp
Marketing Project Manager
skemp@royalfarms.com