



House Bill 1116

Business Regulation - Restaurants and Traders - Licensing Requirements

March 6, 2024

POSITION: Information Only

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Economic Matters Committee:

The *Restaurant Association of Maryland* supported with amendments Chapter 315 of 2022, which made various updates and changes to business license requirements under Title 17 of the Business Regulation Article. Among those changes, [Section 17-1603](#) requires a person to have only a restaurant license whenever the person operates a restaurant or other eating place. Prior to 2022, this section of law required both a restaurant license and a trader's license. The 2022 legislation removed the trader's license requirement from this section of law.

We have been communicating with the Maryland Circuit Court Clerks' Association about this issue. As we understand it through our communications, House Bill 1116 removes a restaurant licensed under [Subtitle 16](#) from the trader's license exemptions under [Section 17-1803](#) (which was added in 2022) because a restaurant that also sells merchandise as part of their business operations (e.g., operating in conjunction with a gift shop or retail store) is required to also have a trader's license.

Our goal in 2022 was to remove the requirement for businesses operating solely as a restaurant to also have a trader's license. Therefore, we have no objection to House Bill 1116 if businesses operating solely as restaurants will not be required to also obtain a trader's license.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Melvin R. Thompson" with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Melvin R. Thompson
Senior Vice President