

HB1116 Business Regulation - Restaurants and Traders - Licensing
Economic Matters Committee – March 6, 2024
Sponsor: Delegate Andrea Harrison
Position: Favorable

Testimony of Mahasin El Amin, Clerk of the Circuit Court, Prince George's County

Thank you, Chair Wilson, Vice Chair Crosby, and members of the committee, for this opportunity to testify in support of House Bill 1116. Thank you, Delegate Harrison, for sponsoring this bill.

For the record, my name is Mahasin El Amin, Clerk of the Circuit Court for Prince George's County. I am also here on behalf of the Maryland Circuit Court Clerks Association.

The 24 Clerks of the Circuit Court unanimously support HB 1116 because it will clarify that businesses that only act as a restaurant will only require a restaurant license. However, if they also sell merchandise then they will need a trader's license. This brings the restaurant license into line with all other business licenses, in that each type of license is separate and having one type of license does not grant the holder an exemption from obtaining another type of license.

HB 1116 will fix the confusion caused by SB 496 from the 2022 session, which gave restaurants the choice of forgoing paying for a trader's license. SB 496 resulted in an extremely chaotic business license renewal season statewide between the Circuit Court Clerk's Offices, the Comptroller Office, and business around the state because retail stores who have a restaurant component had no idea what type of license to obtain.

The Clerks ask for a favorable report on HB 1116, and once again, we thank Delegate Harrison for sponsoring this bill. Thank you for the opportunity to comment, and I am available if you have any questions.