

[2024- 02.14] HB847 Alcoholic Beverages - Class A

Uploaded by: Marlon Amprey

Position: FAV

MARLON AMPREY
Legislative District 40
Baltimore City

DEPUTY MAJORITY WHIP

Economic Matters Committee



The Maryland House of Delegates
6 Bladen Street, Room 315
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3520 · 301-858-3520
800-492-7122 Ext. 3520
Marlon.Amprey@house.state.md.us

THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Monday, February 19, 2024

Testimony of Delegate Marlon Amprey in Support of House Bill 847 Alcoholic Beverages - Class A License - Food Retailers

Dear Chair Wilson, Vice Chair Crosby, and Committee Members,

I am writing today to express my support for HB847, which seeks to amend existing regulations governing Class A alcoholic beverages licenses for food retailers and bring Maryland to the 21st Century like 46 other states across the country. This bill presents a timely and necessary opportunity to modernize our licensing system, support local businesses, and better serve the needs of communities across the state of Maryland.

Currently, the process for obtaining a Class A license presents significant challenges for food retailers, hindering their ability to offer a diversity of beverages to their customers in Maryland. This bill addresses these challenges by allowing and encouraging food retailers to purchase Class A licenses from existing license holders under certain circumstances, as well as by enabling them to apply directly to their local licensing boards for such licenses. By streamlining and simplifying this process, we can empower food retailers to expand their offerings and enhance the overall shopping experience for consumers with the goal of bringing food retail to communities that currently do not have any.

Furthermore, the ability for food retailers to obtain Class A licenses aligns with the evolving preferences and demands of consumers in Maryland. Many residents rely on food retailers as their primary source of groceries, and the availability of alcoholic beverages alongside other products saves time for busy consumers. By allowing food retailers to sell alcoholic beverages, we can meet this demand while also supporting local businesses and promoting economic growth. Many states in the US, like California, Pennsylvania, and Colorado, as well as Washington D.C., allow the sale of beer and wine at grocery and convenience stores with specific regulations in terms of the amount that can be bought and specific timings.

It is important to note that this bill includes several key safeguards to ensure responsible alcohol sales and consumption. For example, food retailers seeking to obtain Class A licenses must meet strict criteria and adhere to regulations established by their local licensing boards. These regulations may include requirements related to responsible service practices, employee training, and compliance with local alcohol laws. By upholding these standards, we can help prevent abuse and mitigate any potential negative impacts on public health and safety.

In summary, HB847 represents a balanced and pragmatic approach to alcohol licensing reform in Maryland. By empowering food retailers to obtain Class A licenses, we can expand consumer choice, support local businesses, and stimulate economic development. I urge the committee to carefully consider the benefits of this bill and take decisive action to advance its passage.

For these reasons, I urge you to vote favorably on HB847.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Marlon Amprey". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "M" and a distinct "A".

Delegate Marlon Amprey
40th Legislative District of Maryland

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Delegate Marlon Amprey
40th Legislative District of Maryland

847.pdf

Uploaded by: Bobby Patel

Position: UNF

Feb 15th 2024

To

House Of State Of Maryland

House Office Building

6 Bladen Street

Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: Oppose To Maryland House bill (HB0847) FOR the purpose of authorizing a food retailer to offer to purchase a Class A license from a Class A license holder under certain circumstances; authorizing a food retailer to 5 apply to a local licensing board for a Class A license under certain circumstances; 6 and generally relating to Class A alcoholic beverages licenses for food retailers.

Dear Representative Marlvn Holmes

My Name Is Bobby Patel from Rip's Wine & Spirits in Bowie MD. I have recently Heard there is interest to draft legislation making the food retailer to offer to purchase a Class A license from a Class A license holder under certain circumstances, authorizing a food retailer to apply to a local licensing board for a Class A license under certain circumstances, and generally relating to Class A alcoholic beverages licenses for food retailers.

I am Strongly Oppose the House Bill that will change whole Liquor store Industry and it would hurt small local businesses in state of Maryland.

I appreciate your help and ask that you please send me a response letting me know if you are able to oppose any future House Bill that hurt our local small liquor store businesses in State of Maryland.

Sincerely,

Bobby Patel

3809 Crain Hwy

Bowie, MD, 20716

HB847&1424.pdf

Uploaded by: Himanshu Amin

Position: UNF

I strongly oppose House Bill 847, and bill House bill 1424. I own and represent Rips Wine and Spirits in Bowie, Prince George's county. I can proudly say the Rip's employs about 85 employees to run its business and I am proud in offering to support this many families by providing their family member a decent paying job. I recently entered in liquor retail business since last 2 years and have paid hefty cost on buying the liquor license with store. I have also invested hundreds of thousands in training employees, upgrading building infrastructure to make smoother operation of my business. I have taken out loans and risked my livelihoods to open this store. If supermarkets are allowed to sell beer and wines and allowed to have multiple licenses, my store would get beaten up on prices by massive grocery stores chains and corporate stores. This move will definitely affect rips operation. That would put me and my employees out of work which may affect their families as well which may push me in bankruptcy.

Please mark my oppose to this bill 847. If you may want to reach out to me, please do not hesitate to reach out at himanshu@ripscountryinn.com or call me at 301-805-5900 x 104

Himanshu Amin

Rips country inn

3809 crain Highway, Bowie Prince George's county

HB847-alc-grocery-stores-MdPHA-UNF-2024.pdf

Uploaded by: Raimee Eck

Position: UNF



Mission: To improve public health in Maryland through education and advocacy *Vision:* Healthy Marylanders living in Healthy Communities

HB 847 Alcoholic Beverages – Class A License – Food Retailers

Hearing Date: 2/19/24

Committee: Economic Matters

Position: Unfavorable

The Maryland Public Health Association’s Alcohol, Cannabis & Tobacco Network urges an unfavorable report on HB 847, which would allow local liquor licensing boards to issue Class A beer or beer/wine licenses to food retail establishments that meet certain requirements in terms of types of products sold, SNAP acceptance, size and location.

Issuing licenses like this could lead to a massive increase in licenses in a short time period. The definition of a food retailer allows inclusion of convenience stores, pharmacies, and gas stations, in addition to Costco, Sam’s, and other grocery store chains. Research consistently demonstrates that increased alcohol outlet density, especially for off-premise outlets (i.e., those who sell unopened containers), is associated with an increase in a number of harms, including violence, criminal activity, domestic violence, and child maltreatment. It is also very costly; a recent study in Baltimore City demonstrated that alcohol-related harms cost \$582 million each year, almost 40% of which the government is responsible for. Alcohol consumption has been steadily rising nationally, especially for women and minorities; as consumption rises, so do alcohol-related harms.

Gas stations; pharmacies; and convenience, grocery, and other chain stores are not primarily in the business of selling alcohol and may not be as well versed and equipped to prevent underage sales. Research demonstrates that alcohol retail stores are more consistent in checking IDs of people purchasing alcohol. Additionally, large chains are generally able to lower the cost of alcohol, which can lead to increased levels of consumption and related harms, as nearby businesses try to compete. This can also have negative effects on these existing locally owned alcohol outlets, as they are ultimately unable to compete with the lower prices.

In legislation passed in 2019, the Alcohol and Tobacco Commission was tasked with “the development of a public health impact statement for all changes to the state alcoholic beverages law...”. A statewide bill like this should be subject to such a statement to scientifically and expertly evaluate the impact on existing businesses, communities, local liquor boards, and public health and safety.

For these reasons, we urge an unfavorable report on HB 847.

The Maryland Public Health Association (MdPHA) is a nonprofit, statewide organization of public health professionals dedicated to improving the lives of all Marylanders through education, advocacy, and collaboration. We support public policies consistent with our vision of healthy Marylanders living in healthy, equitable, communities. MdPHA is the state affiliate of the American Public Health Association, a nearly 150-year-old professional organization dedicated to improving population health and reducing health disparities that plague our state and our nation.

SP.pdf

Uploaded by: Smruti Patel

Position: UNF

Re: my strong oppose to bill HB0847.

I and my family have been living in Maryland since last 15 years. We always enjoying shopping in grocery stores and supercenters with our children under 9 years aged.

- 1) We do not want our kids be introduced with alcohol before their legal age to consume. Kids are our future, we don't want to lock them up in the house and go for grocery. Neither we want to split family by having one parent take care kids at home and other one go for groceries. Let families enjoy the shopping in supercenters together.
- 2) Moreover, current practices in independent liquor store is that they don't allow under age kids in their stores without their parents. If they see under age alone in their stores, store clerks and manager do question them, ask them to leave or don't sell them. Independent stores are enforcing the right practice which supercenter will not be able to enforce as under age are allowed in supercenters freely.

Hence, If weed can't be sold in grocery stores, neither alcohol be sold in supermarket. For the same reason, I'd like **alcohol NOT TO BE SOLD in grocery stores**. It's a very little inconvenience but has benefits like supporting small businesses which keeps our money in our community instead of the massive grocery store chains and their corporations.

Smruti Patel

Proud resident of Greater Baltimore Maryland