



February 21, 2024

Good afternoon Chair Korman, Vice Chair Boyce, and members of the committee:

My name is Jaime Windon and I own the LYON RUM distillery in Saint Michaels, and I serve as chair of the Maryland Distillers Guild Government Affairs Committee, and I am in support of HB 1032.

I truly appreciate the opportunity to speak to this bill, and I want to thank you all for your attention to, and support for, Maryland Alcohol Manufacturers.

My distillery is located in a very small town on the Eastern Shore. With under 1000 residents, we rely on tourism throughout the year to support all of the small businesses, particularly my distillery, which is open daily, year round, even though Saint Michaels is very much a seasonal location. We can all agree that good, clear signage is critical for all drivers, but it is especially so for tourists that are unfamiliar with the area and looking for attractions that might interest them. We have the unique situation of our main street (Talbot Street) being a state highway (Route 33) which means we are extremely limited in regards to the signage that we are able to display. Furthermore, our historic town has exceedingly strict regulations on signage, in both size and quantity. The distillery is located off the main street behind the local winery, which has had a large attractive, state highway sign for as long as I can remember -- at least the 11 years that I've been in business. However, neither the distillery nor the brewery have any proper highway signage -- not in town next to the winery sign, nor on any of the connecting bypass highway miles leading to town, which boast a number of attractions. I simply can't emphasize enough how critical signage is in a tourist corridor, and how much this would make a difference in supporting our distillery and our fellow alcohol manufacturers. Speaking both as someone who owns a distillery, but also travels with the intention of visiting other distilleries, breweries and wineries, signage like this has often aided me in finding a hidden gem when I would have otherwise missed out.

Help put us on the map -- literally!

Thank you for your consideration, and for your support of HB 1032.

Sincerely,

Jaime Windon
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