



**MARYLAND STATE  
LICENSED BEVERAGE ASSOCIATION**

150 E Main Street, Suite 104, Westminster, MD 21157

TO: The Honorable Pamela Beidle, Chair  
Members, Senate Finance Committee  
The Honorable Ron Watson

FROM: MD State Licensed Beverage Association

DATE: February 23, 2024

RE: **OPPOSE** – Senate Bill 186 – Prince George’s County – Alcoholic Beverages – Cigar Lounge License

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The Maryland State Licensed Beverage Association (MSLBA), which consists of approximately 800 Maryland businesses holding alcoholic beverage licenses (restaurants, bars, taverns, and package stores), **opposes** Senate Bill 186.

This legislation would carve an exception to Maryland’s indoor smoking ban to allow for a cigar lounge, and create a Class B-CL (Cigar Lounge) license, which allows the licensee to sell beer, wine, and liquor to customers for on-premise consumption. In short, the bill allows smoking in indoor facilities which serve alcohol.

Effective in 2008, the State implemented the indoor smoking ban and effectively prohibited smoking in bars and restaurants where alcohol is served. But because the ban applied uniformly across the industry, there was a level playing field. Senate Bill 186 reverses that policy, allowing certain establishments where smoking is allowed to obtain a liquor license. While the 2008 law took the smoking out of bars, Senate Bill 186 would put the bar into the smoking facility. The establishments that years ago had this privilege taken away object to this change as fundamentally unfair and ask that the legislation not be adopted. Indeed, MSLBA has opposed every attempt to make similar amendments in other counties, most recently in 2023 in Wicomico County (Senate Bill 795/2023).

As an alternative, if the Delegation chooses to adopt the measure, the Clean Indoor Air Act should be further amended to allow all on-premise licensees to permit the smoking of cigars.

Thank you for your consideration.

**For more information call:**  
MD State Licensed Beverage Assoc.  
410-876-3464