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STATE OF MARYLAND
BOARD OF LIQUOR LICENSE COMMISSIONERS
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TO: The Honorable Members of the Senate Finance Committee

FROM: Michelle Wirzberger, Esq., Deputy Executive Secretary

RE: Senate Bill 895 Baltimore City – Alcoholic Beverages - Licensing Fees

DATE: February 23, 2024

POSITION: SUPPORT

Chair Beidle, Vice-Chair Klausmeier and members of the Senate Finance Committee, please be advised that the Board of Liquor License Commissioners for Baltimore City Supports Senate Bill 895.

Senate Bill 895 would increase the annual licensing fees for all liquor licenses regulated by the Board of Liquor License Commissioners for Baltimore City. The enhanced fees would increase the Board's annual revenue by at least \$823,185. This increased revenue would allow up to four new liquor inspectors to be hired.

Currently, the Agency employs nine (9) liquor inspectors. They each cover routine inspections of licenses in assigned districts that correspond with the nine police districts within Baltimore City. In addition, our inspectors participate in special investigations, post properties to provide notice of upcoming transfer hearings, respond to 311 complaints, assist with the Social Club Task Force and contribute to enforcement efforts when we have large, permitted events for which extensions, pub crawl permits or one-day licenses have been granted such as neighborhood festivals. They also participate in city-wide planning efforts prior to and enforcement strategies during city supported events such as AFRAM, Artscape, and CIAA.

With approximately 1,200 licenses throughout Baltimore City, enforcement of all applicable laws, rules and MOUs is a sizeable and significant task. Employing additional inspectors would enable the Agency to better ensure that all licensees are operating in a way that is respectful of the communities in which they are located.

Therefore, the Board of Liquor License Commissioners for Baltimore City respectfully requests a favorable report on Senate Bill 895.