TO: House Economic Matters Committee

FROM: Mid-Atlantic Petroleum Distributors Association

DATE: February 17, 2025

RE: **HOUSE BILL 1379** – Alcoholic Beverages – Class A License – Retail Establishments

On behalf of Maryland's convenience store marketers and energy distributors, MAPDA urges the committee to issue a favorable with amendment report on HB1379.

Broadly, this legislation would allow a convenience store to receive a Class A license to sell beer and wine.

As the legislature continues considering the idea of expanding the ability of retailers like convenience stores to sell beer and wine, our industry only asks for the opportunity to compete for these licenses. Our stores serve thousands of customers each day to meet their daily needs – fuel, coffee, snacks, fresh food, and other items including many stores which meet the needs of SNAP recipients.

An "interchange fee" – commonly known as a swipe fee – is the fee charged by a bank of credit card processor for its involvement in the payment process.

Convenience stores process approximately 16 million transactions a day, most of which are on payment cards. The swipe fees charged to retailers every time a card is used in their stores is the 2nd highest operating cost for the industry.

Should the committee move forward with HB1379, we would ask for an amendment to remove 4-205.1(f)(1) which requires a sworn security officer to work the area dedicated to the sale of alcohol. This provision would create a regulatory and financial hardship for new licensees not required of current licensees.

Thank you for your consideration. We urge the Economic Matters Committee to issue a **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENT(S) COMMMMITTEE REPORT on HB1379**.

Feeding and fueling the economy through gas, coffee, food, heating oil and propane.

MAPDA is an association of convenience stores and energy distributors in Maryland, Delaware & the District of Columbia.