



Wes Moore | Governor
Aruna Miller | Lt. Governor
Harry Coker, Jr. | Acting Secretary of Commerce

DATE: March 13, 2025
BILL NO: Senate Bill 562
BILL TITLE: State Designations - State Cocktail - Original Maryland Orange Crush
COMMITTEE: Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment
POSITION: Support

The Maryland Department of Commerce (Commerce) supports Senate Bill 562- State Designations - State Cocktail - Original Maryland Orange Crush.

Bill Summary:

Senate Bill 562 designates the original Maryland Orange Crush as the official State cocktail.

Background:

The Orange Crush cocktail was first created in the fall of 1995 at Ocean City's Harborside Bar & Grill. Over the following 30 years the drink has increased in popularity and can now be found across the State and in a variety of flavors and forms, but the original Maryland Orange Crush maintains its status and popularity among Maryland residents and visitors, especially in the warmer summer months. Despite acknowledging that the drink was created in Maryland, the Orange Crush was designated as Delaware's official state cocktail in August 2024.

Rationale:

Senate Bill 562 will officially recognize what Marylanders already knew, and will bring the State the recognition it deserves for being the birthplace of the Orange Crush. This recognition is especially important on Maryland's coast where Delaware is a short drive away and Maryland is at a competitive disadvantage in terms of tax structure. Establishing the original Maryland Orange Crush will be good for tourism because it will give visitors one more reason to take a "tasty" Maryland vacation. Tourism is one of the State's top economic drivers, and it is an industry that thrives on messaging and marketing. Designating the original Maryland orange crush as the State's official cocktail may seem small, but it opens the possibility of inspirational new marketing messages to bring visitors to places like Ocean City to try an orange crush where it originated. Any tourism activity resulting from such a campaign brings economic activity and revenue to the State in the form of Sales and Use Tax revenue – including the 9% taxable rate on all orange crushes sold. In calendar year 2023, visitors to Maryland spent over \$20.5 billion, generating more than \$2.4 billion in state and local tax revenue. Investing in tourism brings a high return to our State, counties, and municipalities.

Commerce respectfully requests a favorable report on Senate Bill 562.