



**Testimony on Senate Bill 0562 – Favorable**  
**State Designations - State Cocktail - Original Maryland Orange Crush**

**To:** Senator Brian J. Feldman  
Chair, Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

**Testimony from:** Kristen Pironis  
Chief Executive Officer, Visit Annapolis & Anne Arundel County  
26 West Street, Annapolis, MD 21401  
410-280-0445 / kp@visitannapolis.org

**Date:** March 11, 2025

Dear Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee:

Delegate Wayne Hartman has long been a champion for Maryland's hospitality and tourism industry, supporting restaurants, attractions, museums, shops, arts centers, venues, and destination marketing and management organizations—all of which work to enhance the visitor experience and improve the quality of life for residents. His commitment to the industry is clear, and he recognizes the undeniable economic impact of tourism.

In 2023, Maryland welcomed 45.1 million visitors, who spent a remarkable \$20.5 billion. Anne Arundel County alone contributed 20 percent of that economic impact, with more than 6.8 million visitors generating \$4.1 billion for the state and supporting over 18,000 direct jobs in the tourism industry in our county alone.

But the true strength of our work isn't just measured in numbers, albeit very impressive numbers.

As a nonprofit, our mission is simple: to foster a welcoming destination and promote tourism that benefits our community, visitors, and partners. At Visit Annapolis & Anne Arundel County, we firmly believe that travel transforms lives. It's not about ticking off a checklist of things and grabbing a plastic souvenir; it's about meaningful and authentic experiences.

In a legislative session that has been challenging, I'm happy to ask for your favorable vote on a bipartisan measure—House Bill 1001/Senate Bill 0562—that celebrates a truly authentic Maryland experience—the State Cocktail: The Original Maryland Orange Crush. We're proud to serve it throughout Anne Arundel County since its invention in Maryland 30 years ago.

Thank you for your continued support of the tourism and hospitality industry. Cheers to making Maryland even more extraordinary, one Orange Crush at a time!

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Kristen Pironis  
Chief Executive Officer  
Visit Annapolis & Anne Arundel County