Witness Testimony – SB 0824

Thank you Chair Beidle and Vice Chair Hayes, and everyone else on the Fianance Committee, for considering my testimony.

My name is Alex Arnsberger and I live in Silver Spring with my husband and 6 year old daughter. I am here to express support for SB 0824.

As with any retail consumer, I am motivated by three factors when I decide where I shop and what I buy. I am motivated by cost, convenience, and selection. As a resident of Montgomery County, and a consumer of both beer and wine, I would give poor scores to all three of those factors for Maryland when it comes to purchasing wine.

As a consequence of these three factors, the economically rational decision I have made is to drive to Virginia and spend my money and tax dollars in another state. The cost of commuting pays for itself by the money I save on the product. It's less convenient, sure, but I already need to make a special trip to purchase wine anyway. And, most importantly, I am able to purchase the products that I want, which are not available for purchase anywhere in the state of Maryland.

I hear and understand the argument for protecting the livelihoods of Maryland's small business owners that operate the existing wine and beer retail shops. However, a nuance that I want to bring attention to is that the laws as they currently exist do not bring <u>my</u> business to the small retailers that these rules are aiming to protect. When I visit one of these establishments, I often leave emptyhanded because the selection is minimal and the costs are too high. These small retailers would not be losing my business if this bill were to pass, because they never had it. I am going to spend my money on the products I want, and I'd rather do that in my home state than in Virigina. I know other family, friends and neighbors that commute to Virginia in order to purchase products not available in Maryland.

SB 0824 helps solve for the issues that prevent citizens from shopping in Maryland, and I urge you to support this bill. Thank you.