

SHANEKA HENSON
Legislative District 30
Anne Arundel County

Judicial Proceedings Committee

Joint Committee on Children,
Youth, and Families



James Senate Office Building
11 Bladen Street, Room 203
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
410-841-3578
800-492-7122 Ext. 3578
Shaneka.Henson@senate.state.md.us

THE SENATE OF MARYLAND
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

SPONSOR TESTIMONY

Senate Bill 888

Alcoholic Beverages-License and Permit Distance Requirements

Chair Beidle and Committee Members

Thank you for the opportunity to introduce and provide important details regarding SB 888-Alcoholic Beverages-License and Permit Distance Requirements.

For the record, I am Senator Shaneka Helson from the 30th Legislative District of Anne Arundel County, MD.

SB 888 authorizes the Anne Arundel County Board of License Commissioners to be able to issue a Class B beer and wine (on-sale) license or a Class B beer, wine, and liquor (on-sale) license for any new establishment located within 1,000 feet of a school located at the Annapolis Mall. It also authorizes the board to issue a dancing permit to the holder of a Class H license if the licensed premises is located within 1,000 feet in a straight line from entry to entry from a school located at the Annapolis Mall. The bill takes effect July 1, 2025.

The bill makes a special exception to the rule prohibiting any alcoholic beverage licenses from being issued within 1,000 feet of a school – specifically at the Annapolis Mall.

The reason the exception is being sought, is that the mall is working with a charter school to establish education facilities within a large portion of the mall's unused space. At the same time, the state has a law prohibiting the location of restaurants serving alcohol within 100 ft of education facilities. The current restaurant and entertainment tenants in the Annapolis Mall would not be affected by this law. However, any new mall tenants in the restaurant and entertainment industry would be. The current law would curtail any future efforts to increase the occupancy rate and economic activity in the mall – which is why the exception is needed.

This bill adds an additional but narrow exception to the rule, allowing restaurant licenses that also obtain an entertainment permit to locate within 1,000-feet of a school. It applies only to the Annapolis Mall.

Officials of The Charter School are aware of this legislation, and are here today to provide their supportive statement, as is the representative of the Annapolis Mall owner.

Panelists include:

Kathy Lane, Owner's Representative
New Village Academy Public Charter School, Inc.

J. Steven Wise, Esq,
Annapolis Mall Owner Representative

After you hear the testimony from those here today, I urge that you give a favorable report to SB 888.