

March 30, 2026

Testimony in support of HB 1243
Callie Hankey, Owner, Two Lions Vineyards

Good Afternoon:

My name is Callie Hankey, and I co-own Two Lions Vineyards in Upper Marlboro. We planted our first 2,300 vines in 2019 and opened our winery in June 2022. We are proud to employ 36 staff at our winery.

I would like to thank Chair Wilkins, Vice Chair Feldmark and Delegate Williams for their support of this bill. Thank you to the entire Prince George's County Delegation for sponsoring this bill and understanding the importance of this issue to the craft beverage producers in our county. Prince George's County is currently the home to 7 wineries, 5 breweries and 3 distilleries.

I write in support of HB 1243 because the tax rates on small manufacturing businesses are anticompetitive and disincentivize business growth at a time when the county needs to support businesses and the entire state faces a massive budget deficit. Anything we can do to encourage and promote small manufacturing growth should be made permanent; the existing tax rates currently hinder businesses like ours from being able to reinvest and grow.

Maryland ranks 46th in the country for its overall State Business Tax Climate and has the dubious honor of being the 3rd most costly state in which to do business. Our state's high tax rates erode competitiveness, drive businesses away and harm communities that depend on businesses like ours for jobs and local investment. Businesses fuel our economy and support our communities through innovation, job creation and funding local initiatives. To ensure our success we need to reduce burdens and foster policies that enable and encourage growth.

I asked the committee to please vote in favor of HB 1243 to help small craft alcohol manufacturers succeed and thrive in Prince George's County.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Callie Hankey". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Callie Hankey