



**House Economic Matters Committee  
March 4, 2026**

**House Bill 1303 - Alcoholic Beverages - Class A License - Retail Establishments  
Alcoholic Beverages Modernization Act of 2026**

**Oppose**

NCADD-Maryland opposes House Bill 1303 because we oppose expanding the locations where a person can purchase alcohol. Research demonstrates that greater alcohol outlet density leads to increased excessive alcohol use and ultimately greater alcohol-related harms, such as violence, traffic crashes, and property damage.<sup>1</sup>

This correlation between access and consumption is not unique to any given community or population. However, neighborhoods with a higher proportion of Black residents or more families living in poverty tend to have a higher alcohol outlet density. Mapping of alcohol outlet density in Durham, NC and Baltimore City found areas with a history of redlining to be a strong predictor of where alcohol outlets cluster, even many decades later.<sup>2,3</sup>

This bill will also have a uniquely harmful impact on those in recovery from alcohol use disorder. Substance availability significantly increases the risk of substance use relapse.<sup>4</sup> Alcohol-free stores can be beneficial for long-term recovery by providing a safe environment that minimizes the risk of unnecessary triggers. Safe spaces such as these can lead to improved abstinence rates and better mental health outcomes.

Regulating alcohol outlet density is one of the most effective strategies for reducing excessive alcohol consumption and related harms.<sup>5</sup> We urge an unfavorable report on House Bill 1303.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://countertools.org/blog/alcoholoutletdensityimpact/>

<sup>2</sup> [https://www.cdc.gov/pcd/issues/2021/21\\_0127.htm](https://www.cdc.gov/pcd/issues/2021/21_0127.htm)

<sup>3</sup> <https://pubmed.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/31264024/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S2949875923002953>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.thecommunityguide.org/findings/alcohol-excessive-consumption-regulation-alcohol-outlet-density.html>