

March 2nd, 2026

TO: House Economic Matters Committee

FROM: Maranda Poe, Baltimore City

RE: Alcoholic Beverages - Class A License - Retail Establishments (Alcoholic Beverages Modernization Act of 2026)

POSITION: Support

Chair Valderrama, Vice Chair Charkoudian, and Members of the Committee:

I am pleased to submit this testimony in support of HB1303, the Alcoholic Beverages Modernization Act of 2026.

Grocery stores serve as economic engines in communities across Maryland. They provide employment opportunities, generate tax revenue, and draw consistent foot traffic that supports neighboring small businesses. Yet they face intense competition and rising operating costs. Allowing beer and wine sales would provide a carefully regulated opportunity to diversify revenue and remain competitive in today's retail environment.

This legislation also represents an opportunity to strengthen food access. By improving the financial viability of grocery stores, especially in many rural and underserved communities, the State can help preserve access to fresh produce and staple goods. A stable grocery store often serves as a cornerstone of community health and economic activity.

By supporting HB1303, the General Assembly can promote economic resilience, consumer convenience, and community stability. I respectfully request a favorable report.

Sincerely,

Maranda Poe

524 S Bond St

Baltimore MD 21231