

**HB1303\_OConnor\_FAVORABLE.docx.pdf**

Uploaded by: Brian O'Connor

Position: FAV

**HB1303**

March 2, 2026

TO: House Economic Matters Committee

FROM: Brian O'Connor

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 support HB 1303 and respectfully request a favorable report.

This bill is not about convenience in the abstract — it is about time. For working Marylanders balancing jobs, family, and full schedules, small inefficiencies add up. Maryland law requires a separate trip and transaction to purchase beer or wine — items that are part of normal grocery shopping in most other states. That extra step no longer reflects how people live.

HB 1303 is a practical modernization. It gives residents some time back while preserving competition. Independent liquor stores will continue to compete and succeed on service, expertise, and selection.

In my neighborhood, we rely on our independent liquor store precisely because of the convenience it offers. Its value is the time it saves — being able to walk over rather than drive across town on a busy evening. This legislation is not about stamping out small businesses; it simply removes an unnecessary barrier and allows stores to compete on merit.

I respectfully urge a favorable report on HB 1303.

Sincerely,

*Brian O'Connor*

Brian O'Connor

Upper Fells Point, Baltimore MD

# **HB1303 - Christine West Testimony.pdf**

Uploaded by: Christine West

Position: FAV

March 2nd, 2026

**TO:** House Economic Matters Committee

**FROM:** Christine West, Coppin Heights, Baltimore City

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

**POSITION:** Support

I am pleased to support HB1303 because it prioritizes everyday practicality for Maryland residents.

Many households carefully plan their weekly grocery trips around work schedules, childcare, and transportation availability. For families with only one vehicle, or those relying on public transportation, multiple stops are not just inconvenient, they are burdensome. Consolidating purchases into a single location would make completing required errands more manageable.

Reducing unnecessary trips also decreases fuel consumption and time spent on the road. Small efficiencies add up, particularly for families living paycheck to paycheck or managing tight schedules. This legislation offers a simple improvement that would have meaningful daily impact.

For these reasons, I respectfully request a favorable report on HB1303.

Sincerely,

Christine West  
1803 Braddish Avenue

**HB1303 - FAVORABLE.pdf**

Uploaded by: James Peak

Position: FAV

**HB1303**

TO: House Economic Matters Committee

FROM: James Reece Peak III, Baltimore County

RE: House Bill 1303 – Alcoholic Beverages – Class A License – Food Retailers

POSITION: **SUPPORT**

DATE: February 17, 2026

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

I am writing to urge a **favorable** report on **House Bill 1303**. Maryland is currently one of only four states that still prohibit grocery stores from selling beer and wine—an outdated policy that nearly 80% of Marylanders want to change. Allowing "one-stop shopping" is a commonsense modernization that respects the busy schedules of Maryland families by saving time and reducing unnecessary travel.

Beyond convenience, this bill is vital for the economic health of our communities. Grocery stores operate on razor-thin margins, and allowing beer and wine sales provides a critical revenue stream that can prevent store closures, particularly in rural and underserved "food deserts." By strengthening these essential community anchors, we ensure more Marylanders have reliable access to fresh food and local jobs.

Experience in 46 other states demonstrates that grocery stores and independent liquor stores can thrive together. **HB 1303** simply brings Maryland in line with the rest of the country while prioritizing consumer choice and economic stability. For these reasons, I respectfully request a **favorable** report on **HB 1303**.

Sincerely,

James Reece Peak III

12212 Cleghorn Rd

Cockeysville, MD 21030

# **HB1303\_Sandavol\_FAV.pdf**

Uploaded by: Jonathan Sadaval

Position: FAV

March 2nd, 2026

**TO:** House Economic Matters Committee

**FROM:** Jonathan Sandaval

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

**POSITION:** Support

Dear members of the House Economic Matters Committee,

Grocery stores are economic anchors in our communities across Maryland. They create local jobs, generate tax revenue, support nearby small businesses, and increase access to fresh food. When a grocery store closes, the economic and social ripple effects can be devastating. This is particularly true for working-class neighborhoods and rural areas.

Allowing grocery stores to sell beer and wine is a sensible way to make it easier for them to operate and remain viable. At the same time, experience in the 46 states where this is already permitted demonstrates that independently owned liquor stores can continue to thrive by offering curated selections, knowledgeable service, and unique products.

The convenience for grocers to sell beer and wine is meaningful for young families like mine with limited time to run errands and ensure all of my families weekday and weekend needs are met. I still plan to visit my local liquor store like Fulton Liquors because I want to support local business owners who provide me with one of the best curated bourbon selections in my area. That business is not going away with grocery sales!

Please support HB 1303

Jonathan Sandoval

8524 Reservoir Rd

Fulton, MD 20759

**HB1303\_Rowland\_FAV.pdf**

Uploaded by: Jonathon Rowland

Position: FAV

March 2nd, 2026

**TO:** House Economic Matters Committee

**FROM:** Jonathon Rowland, Baltimore City

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

**POSITION:** Support

I am writing to express my support for HB1303, the Alcoholic Beverages Modernization Act of 2026.

For most Maryland families, time is one of the most limited and valuable resources. Between work, school activities, caregiving responsibilities, and commuting, efficiency in daily errands matters. Maryland's prohibition on grocery store beer and wine sales forces residents to make an additional stop for a routine purchase that could easily be completed during their weekly grocery trip.

This requirement adds unnecessary travel, increases traffic congestion, and consumes time that could otherwise be spent with family or in the community. In 46 other states, consumers are trusted to complete their shopping in one place. Marylanders deserve that same level of convenience.

HB1303 is a straightforward policy reform that reduces redundant errands without compromising regulation or oversight. For these reasons, I respectfully request a favorable report on HB1303.

Sincerely,

Jonathon Rowland

524 S Bond St

Baltimore, MD 21231

**HB 1303\_Simms\_FAV.pdf**

Uploaded by: Kate Simms

Position: FAV

March 2nd, 2026

**TO:** House Economic Matters Committee

**FROM:** Kate Simms, Baltimore

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

**POSITION:** Support

Dear members of the House Economic Matters Committee,

I am writing to request your support for House Bill 1303 Alcoholic Beverages - Class A License - Retail Establishments (Alcoholic Beverages Modernization Act of 2026). Grocery stores are economic anchors in our communities across Maryland. They create local jobs, generate tax revenue, support nearby small businesses, and increase access to fresh food. When a grocery store closes, the economic and social ripple effects can be devastating. This is particularly true for working-class neighborhoods and rural areas.

Allowing grocery stores to sell beer and wine is a sensible way to make it easier for them to operate and remain viable. At the same time, experience in the 46 states where this is already permitted demonstrates that independently owned liquor stores can continue to thrive by offering curated selections, knowledgeable service, and unique products.

This legislation supports economic growth without eliminating opportunity for existing retailers, which is why I enthusiastically request a favorable report on HB 1303

In addition, attached to this testimony is a community letter that was recently sent to Senate President Bill Ferguson, signed by over 70 Baltimore-area community leaders, requesting support for HB 1303

Thank you,

Kate Simms

1630 Lancaster St,

Baltimore MD 21231

Kate Simms  
1630 Lancaster St  
Baltimore, MD 21231  
o/b/o Baltimore Community Leaders

February 9, 2026

Senate President Bill Ferguson  
State House, H-107  
Annapolis, MD 21401

**Re. Community support for SB75: Beer and wine sales in grocery stores**

President Ferguson:

We, the undersigned Baltimore City community leaders & members, respectfully urge you to support Senate Bill 75 sponsored by Senator Antonio Hayes, which allows beer and wine sales in grocery stores.

Maryland remains one of only a few states that prohibits grocery stores from selling beer and wine—an outdated restriction that no longer reflects how residents shop or live. These laws create unnecessary inconvenience for consumers, forcing separate trips for everyday purchases that are combined in most other states.

Allowing grocery stores to sell beer and wine would provide greater convenience for Maryland families while supporting local retailers and their workers. Grocery stores already operate under strict regulations and have extensive experience with age verification and responsible sales. Modernizing the law would bring Maryland in line with national norms while maintaining strong safeguards.

Public polling and community engagement consistently show broad support for this change. Marylanders want updated laws that reflect today's realities, promote consumer choice, and encourage grocery retail investment across Maryland.

We respectfully ask you to support legislation that allows grocery stores to sell beer and wine and helps move Maryland's alcohol laws into the modern era. Thank you for your consideration and for your continued service to our community.

Sincerely,

**Janet Allen**  
Heritage Crossing  
1001 Argyle Ave  
Baltimore, MD 21201

**Lauren Baranyay**  
Fells Point  
513 S Durham St  
Baltimore, MD 21231

**Michael Bates**  
Greektown  
133 S. Macon St  
Baltimore, MD 21224

**Matthew Bleakney**

Riverside Ave  
101 East Wells St  
Apt A505  
Baltimore, MD 21230

**Brooke Bomberger**

Greektown  
415 S. Lehigh St  
Baltimore, MD 21224

**James Bromwell**

Federal Hill  
113 E Montgomery St  
Baltimore, MD 21230

**Rebekah Bromwell**

Federal Hill  
113 E Montgomery St  
Baltimore, MD 21230

**Juliana Buonanno**

Canton  
3200 Fleet St  
Baltimore, MD 21224

**Rachel-Lyn Cavano**

Federal Hill  
17 E Ostend St  
Baltimore, MD 21230

**Corinne Dallain Scheitler**

Fells Point  
1717 Lancaster St.  
Baltimore, MD 21231

**Harold Dams**

Fells Point  
1705 Lancaster St  
Baltimore, MD 21231

**Luis Dams**

Fells Point  
1705 Lancaster St  
Baltimore, MD 21231

**Emma Dams**

Fells Prospect  
242 S Chester St  
Baltimore, MD 21231

**Liam Davis**

Greektown  
345 South Lehigh St  
Baltimore, MD 21224

**Jeff Dewberry**

Riverside  
1304 Jackson St  
Baltimore, MD 21230

**Antonio Dickerson**

Woodbourne Heights  
5410 Purdue Ave  
Baltimore, MD 21239

**Brian Dorney**

Federal Hill  
210 Grindall St  
Baltimore, MD 21230

**Depue Duffeyl**

Locust Point  
1226 Hull St  
Baltimore, MD 21230

**Maritza Frontado**

Fells Prospect  
242 S Chester St  
Baltimore, MD 21231

**Meredith Good**

Riverside  
1615 Race St  
Baltimore, MD 21230

**Kaitlyn Grady**

Riverside  
1803 Westphal Pl  
Baltimore, MD 21230

**Joel Grahamz**

Federal Hill  
218 E Montgomery St  
Baltimore, MD 21230

**Autumn Grant**

Downtown Baltimore  
300 St. Paul Place  
Baltimore, MD 21202

**Dr. Alvin C. Hathaway, Sr.**

Upton/Marble Hill  
1315 Division St.  
Baltimore, MD 21217

**Eileen Howard****Ashleigh Johnson****Ashkan Katirai**

Federal Hill  
611 S Charles Street  
Baltimore, MD 21230

**Chris Lewkovich**

O'Donnell Square  
900 S. Macon St  
Baltimore, MD 21224

**Kelsey McCoskey**

Federal Hill  
110 East Fort Ave  
Baltimore, MD 21230

**Zach Myers**

Hampden  
1016 W 42nd St  
Baltimore, MD 21211

**Brian O'Doherty**

Charles Village  
2609 Guilford Ave  
Baltimore, MD 21218

**Jodie Rohrer**

Butcher's Hill  
7 S Castle St  
Baltimore, MD 21231

**Jarol Sanchez**

Fells Prospect  
242 S Chester St  
Baltimore, MD 21231

**Kate Simms**

Fell's Point  
1630 Lancaster St  
Baltimore, MD 21231

**Locchanan Sreeharikesan**

Kenilworth Park  
4529 Saint Georges Ave  
Baltimore, MD 21212

**Alexus Martin**

Ridgleys Delight  
700 Portland St  
Baltimore, MD 21230

**Chris Moore**

Federal Hill  
10 W Churchill St  
Baltimore, MD 21230

**Rachel Greenberg**

Pig Town  
1149 Nanticoke St  
Baltimore, MD 21230

**Maranda Poe**

Fell's Point  
524 S Bond St  
Baltimore, MD 21231

**Cesar Romero**

Bayview  
365 Cornwall St  
Baltimore, MD 21224

**Mark Scheitler**

Fells Point, Baltimore  
1717 Lancaster St  
Baltimore, MD 21231

**Brody Snook**

Federal Hill  
817 S Charles St  
Baltimore, MD 21230

**Michael Steward**

Fells Point  
807 South Bond St  
Baltimore, MD 21231

**Mario Marzette**

Fells Point  
526 South Bond St  
Baltimore, MD 21231

**Micah Morris**

Roland Park  
110 Elmwood Rd  
Baltimore, MD 21210

**Brian O'Connor**

Upper Fells Point  
241 S Washington St.  
Baltimore, MD 21231

**Kenneth Rebella**

Roland Park  
110 Elmwood Rd  
Baltimore, MD 21210

**Jonathon Rowland**

Fells Point  
524 S Bond St  
Baltimore, MD 21231

**Lisa Seitz**

Baltimore  
103 E Wells St  
Baltimore, MD 21230

**Kristin Speaker**

Riverside  
428 E Randall St  
Baltimore, MD 21230

**Maya Suresh**

Federal Hill  
26 East Henrietta St  
Baltimore, MD 21230

**Jonathan Susman**

Harlem Park  
507 N Carrollton Ave  
Baltimore, MD 21223

**Roxanne Walton**

Otterbein  
203 W. Hill St.  
Baltimore, MD 21230

**Amy Stern**

Federal Hill  
212 E. Montgomery St  
Baltimore, MD 21230

**Wintana Asfaha**

Downtown Baltimore  
100 E Redwood St  
Baltimore, MD 21202

**John Rohrer**

Fell's Point  
701 S. Ann St Apt. 1A  
Baltimore, MD 21231

**Adam Nicholson**

Federal Hill  
311 E Cross St  
Baltimore, MD 21230

Federal Hill  
25 E Wheeling St  
Baltimore, MD 21230

**Claudia Towles**

Fells Point  
1720 Lancaster St  
Baltimore, MD 21231

**Ian Wolfe**

Greektown  
837 Ponca St  
Baltimore, MD 21224

**Francis Landolf**

Federal Hill  
129 Warren Ave  
Baltimore, MD 21230

**Caitlin DuPont**

Federal Hill  
25 W Montgomery St  
Baltimore, MD 21230

**Richard Yeagley**

Hampden  
3450 Hickory Ave  
Baltimore, MD 21230

**Paris Bienert**

Tuscany-Canterbury  
100 W University Pkwy  
Baltimore, MD 21210

Butcher's Hill  
7 S Castle St  
Baltimore, MD 21231

**Sean Tully**

Downtown  
19 East Fayette St Apt 502  
Baltimore, MD 21202

**Peter Bodde**

Fells Point  
1607 Aliceanna St  
Baltimore, MD 21231

**Adam Jones**

Mount Vernon  
605 Park Ave Apt. 18  
Baltimore, MD 21201

**Alexandra Votaw**

Federal Hill  
35 E Montgomery St  
Baltimore, MD 21204

**Estela Martinez**

Riverside  
124 E Gittings St  
Baltimore, MD 21230

**Shannon Bishoff**

Federal Hill  
1321 Clarkson St  
Baltimore, MD 21230

cc: Delegate Luke Clippinger  
Delegate Robbyn Lewis  
Delegate Mark Edelson

# **HB1303\_Rebella\_FAV.pdf**

Uploaded by: Kenneth Rebella

Position: FAV

**HB1303**

March 2, 2026

TO: House Economic Matters Committee

FROM: [Name, Neighborhood / County]

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 write in support of HB1303 as a Maryland resident who recently moved from a state where purchasing beer and wine at the grocery store is simply part of everyday life. That firsthand experience makes Maryland's current restriction feel all the more unnecessary.

Back home, picking up a bottle of wine with dinner ingredients or grabbing a six-pack during the weekly grocery run was unremarkable — just part of a single, efficient errand. When I moved to Maryland, I was genuinely surprised to learn that was not an option here. That extra trip to a separate retailer costs time, fuel, and the kind of mental load that busy families already carry too much of.

I can say from experience that grocery beer and wine sales do not undermine public safety, eliminate small businesses, or change the character of a community. In the 46 states where this is already permitted, it is simply a convenience that residents take for granted. Maryland families deserve the same.

HB1303 is a practical, overdue reform. I respectfully request a favorable report.

Sincerely,

Kenneth Rebella  
110 Elmwood Rd  
Baltimore MD 21202

# **HB1303 - Liam Davis Testimony.pdf**

Uploaded by: Liam Davis

Position: FAV

March 2nd, 2026

**TO:** House Economic Matters Committee

**FROM:** Liam Davis, Greentown, 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:

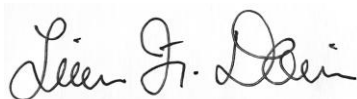
I am writing to express my support for HB1303, the Alcoholic Beverages Modernization Act of 2026.

Grocery stores are more than retail establishments—they are major local employers that serve as foundations for healthy communities. They provide stable jobs for thousands of Maryland residents, including young people entering the workforce, working parents supporting their families, and long-time employees building careers in retail management and operations.

When a grocery store succeeds, the surrounding community benefits. Employees earn wages that are spent locally, nearby businesses see increased foot traffic, and residents maintain convenient access to fresh food. However, grocery retailers operate on extremely narrow margins and face rising costs in labor, transportation, and utilities. Allowing beer and wine sales would provide a responsible additional revenue stream that helps sustain these jobs and keep stores open.

Supporting HB1303 is a vote to strengthen Maryland's retail workforce and preserve the economic stability that grocery stores bring to neighborhoods across our state. I respectfully request a favorable report.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Liam J. Davis". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "L".

Liam Davis

345 South Lehigh Street

**HB1303\_Poe\_FAV.pdf**

Uploaded by: Maranda Poe

Position: FAV

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

**HB1303\_Marzette\_FAV.pdf**

Uploaded by: Mario Marzette

Position: FAV

March 2nd, 2026

**TO:** House Economic Matters Committee

**FROM:** Mario Marzette

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

**POSITION:** Support

I am writing to express my support for HB1303, the Alcoholic Beverages Modernization Act of 2026.

Convenience matters. When residents can complete their grocery shopping in a single trip, they save valuable time that can be spent with family, at work, or in their communities. Maryland's current prohibition creates unnecessary inconvenience and no longer reflects the realities of modern life.

As someone who recently moved to Maryland, I was shocked that this antiquated law was still in effect. I have enjoyed most of my adult life being able to purchase beer and wine at grocery stores and would very much like to be able to do so here in Maryland as well.

In addition, allowing beer and wine sales in grocery stores would not eliminate independent liquor stores, which can continue to distinguish themselves through selection and service. Instead, it would simply give consumers more flexibility and reduce redundant errands.

This commonsense reform prioritizes efficiency, consumer choice, and practicality which is why I am formally requesting a favorable report on

Sincerely,

Mario Marzette

526 S Bond St

Baltimore, MD 21231

**[2026 - 02.24] HB1303 Amendment 123229 (150 sq ft**

Uploaded by: Marlon Amprey

Position: FAV



**HB1303/123229/1**

AMENDMENTS  
PREPARED  
BY THE  
DEPT. OF LEGISLATIVE  
SERVICES

24 FEB 26  
11:35:43

BY: Delegate Amprey  
(To be offered in the Economic Matters Committee)

AMENDMENT TO HOUSE BILL 1303  
(First Reading File Bill)

On page 4, after line 17, insert:

**“(I) DEDICATE MORE THAN 150 SQUARE FEET OF FLOOR SPACE IN THE PUBLIC AREA OF THE STORE TO THE SALE OF BEER AND WINE;”**;

and in lines 18, 24, 25, and 27, strike “(I)”, “(II)”, “(III)”, and “(IV)”, respectively, and substitute “(II)”, “(III)”, “(IV)”, and “(V)”, respectively.

**[2026 - 02.24] HB1303 Amendment 123229 Reprint (15**

Uploaded by: Marlon Amprey

Position: FAV

# HOUSE BILL 1303

A1  
HB 1379/25 – ECM

6lr2842

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By: **Delegates Amprey, Boafo, Ruff, Solomon, and Spiegel**  
Introduced and read first time: February 12, 2026  
Assigned to: Economic Matters

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Alcoholic Beverages – Class A License – Retail Establishments**  
3 **(Alcoholic Beverages Modernization Act of 2026)**

4 FOR the purpose of authorizing certain establishments that operate as a food retailer,  
5 pharmacy, or retail service station to offer to purchase a Class A license from a Class  
6 A license holder under certain circumstances; authorizing the retail establishments  
7 to apply to a local licensing board for a Class A license under certain circumstances;  
8 and generally relating to Class A alcoholic beverages licenses for retail  
9 establishments that operate as a food retailer, pharmacy, or retail service station.

10 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
11 Article – Alcoholic Beverages and Cannabis  
12 Section 4–205 and 4–303  
13 Annotated Code of Maryland  
14 (2024 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

15 BY adding to  
16 Article – Alcoholic Beverages and Cannabis  
17 Section 4–205.1  
18 Annotated Code of Maryland  
19 (2024 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

20 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,  
21 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

22 **Article – Alcoholic Beverages and Cannabis**

23 4–205.

24 (a) This section does not apply to:

2 REPRINT OF HOUSE BILL 1303 as amended by HB1303/123229/1 02/24/26 at 11:34 AM

1 (1) an establishment that already holds a Class A, Class B, or Class D beer  
2 license, beer and wine license, or beer, wine, and liquor license; or

3 (2) a license holder that sells alcoholic beverages at discount prices.

4 (b) [A] EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN § 4-205.1 OF THIS SUBTITLE, A local  
5 licensing board may not issue a Class A, Class B, or Class D beer license, beer and wine  
6 license, or beer, wine, and liquor license for use in conjunction with or on the premises of:

7 (1) a chain store;

8 (2) a supermarket; or

9 (3) a discount house.

10 4-205.1.

11 (A) (1) IN THIS SECTION THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS  
12 INDICATED.

13 (2) "FOOD RETAILER" MEANS A RETAIL ESTABLISHMENT THAT:

14 (i) OFFERS FOR SALE FOOD PRODUCTS IN AT LEAST FIVE OF  
15 THE FOLLOWING CATEGORIES:

16 1. FRESH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES;

17 2. FRESH AND UNCOOKED MEAT, POULTRY, AND  
18 SEAFOOD;

19 3. DAIRY PRODUCTS;

20 4. CANNED FOODS;

21 5. FROZEN FOODS; AND

22 6. DRY GROCERIES AND BAKED GOODS;

23 (ii) ACCEPTS SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE  
24 PROGRAM CREDITS AS PAYMENT FOR FOOD AND BEVERAGES; AND

25 (iii) HAS A MINIMUM OF 4,000 SQUARE FEET.

26 (3) "RETAIL ESTABLISHMENT" MEANS AN ESTABLISHMENT THAT:

- 1 (I) 1. IS A FOOD RETAILER;
- 2 2. IS A PHARMACY OPERATED BY A PERSON THAT HOLDS
- 3 A PHARMACY PERMIT ISSUED BY THE STATE BOARD OF PHARMACY UNDER § 12-401
- 4 OF THE HEALTH OCCUPATIONS ARTICLE; OR
- 5 3. IS A RETAIL SERVICE STATION THAT SELLS GASOLINE
- 6 AND DIESEL FUEL OR HAS ON-SITE ELECTRIC CHARGING CAPABILITIES FOR A
- 7 MINIMUM OF SIX MOTOR VEHICLES SIMULTANEOUSLY; AND

8 (II) EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN DIVISION II OF THIS ARTICLE, HAS

9 A PRIMARY ENTRANCEWAY THAT IS AT LEAST:

- 10 1. 300 FEET FROM THE NEAREST POINT OF A PLACE OF
- 11 WORSHIP OR SCHOOL; AND
- 12 2. 100 FEET FROM ANY RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY NOT
- 13 LOCATED IN THE SAME BUILDING OR STRUCTURE AS THE RETAIL ESTABLISHMENT.

14 (B) (1) A RETAIL ESTABLISHMENT LOCATED LESS THAN 3,000 FEET

15 FROM A CLASS A LICENSE HOLDER MAY OFFER TO PURCHASE THE CLASS A LICENSE

16 FROM THE LICENSE HOLDER.

17 (2) A RETAIL ESTABLISHMENT THAT OBTAINS A LICENSE IN

18 ACCORDANCE WITH PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION SHALL CONVERT THE

19 LICENSE, IF NECESSARY, TO A CLASS A BEER, CLASS A BEER AND WINE, OR CLASS

20 A BEER AND LIGHT WINE LICENSE, REGARDLESS OF THE TYPE OF CLASS A LICENSE

21 THAT WAS PURCHASED.

22 (C) (1) IF A LICENSE HOLDER DOES NOT ACCEPT A RETAIL

23 ESTABLISHMENT'S OFFER, THE RETAIL ESTABLISHMENT MAY APPLY TO THE LOCAL

24 LICENSING BOARD FOR A CLASS A BEER OR CLASS A BEER AND WINE LICENSE IN

25 ACCORDANCE WITH THE LOCAL LICENSING BOARD'S RULES.

26 (2) DEPENDING ON THE TYPES OF LICENSES AVAILABLE IN THE

27 JURISDICTION, THE LOCAL LICENSING BOARD SHALL ISSUE TO THE RETAIL

28 ESTABLISHMENT:

- 29 (I) A CLASS A BEER LICENSE;
- 30 (II) A CLASS A BEER AND WINE LICENSE; OR

4 REPRINT OF HOUSE BILL 1303 as amended by HB1303/123229/1 02/24/26 at 11:34 AM

1 (III) A CLASS A BEER AND LIGHT WINE LICENSE.

2 (D) AN APPLICATION FOR A CLASS A BEER OR CLASS A BEER AND WINE  
3 LICENSE SUBMITTED BY A RETAIL ESTABLISHMENT:

4 (1) IS PRESUMED TO BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE COMMUNITY;  
5 AND

6 (2) MAY NOT BE DENIED FOR ANY REASON OTHER THAN A REASON  
7 TRADITIONALLY CONSIDERED BY A LOCAL LICENSING BOARD.

8 (E) A HOLDER OF A LICENSE ISSUED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS SECTION  
9 OR AN EMPLOYEE DESIGNATED BY THE HOLDER SHALL COMPLETE TRAINING IN AN  
10 APPROVED ALCOHOL AWARENESS PROGRAM IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 4-505 OF THIS  
11 TITLE.

12 (F) A HOLDER OF A LICENSE ISSUED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS SECTION:

13 (1) SHALL EMPLOY SWORN SECURITY PERSONNEL FOR THE PUBLIC  
14 AREA OF THE STORE DEDICATED TO THE SALE OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES;

15 (2) MAY SELL ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES BETWEEN THE HOURS OF 9  
16 A.M. AND 8 P.M., MONDAY THROUGH SATURDAY; AND

17 (3) MAY NOT:

(I) DEDICATE MORE THAN 150 SQUARE FEET OF FLOOR SPACE IN THE  
PUBLIC AREA OF THE STORE TO THE SALE OF BEER AND WINE;

18 ~~(II)~~ (II) SELL ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES BY MEANS OF A  
19 SELF-SCANNING CASH REGISTER OR OTHER AUTOMATED SYSTEM THAT IS:

20 1. CAPABLE OF RECOVERING STORED INFORMATION  
21 RELATED TO THE SALE PRICE OF INDIVIDUAL RETAIL ITEMS; AND

22 2. OPERATED ON A SELF-SERVICE BASIS BY A  
23 CUSTOMER;

24 ~~(III)~~ (III) DELIVER ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES;

25 ~~(IV)~~ (IV) SELL INDIVIDUAL CANS OR BOTTLES OF MIXED COCKTAILS  
26 OR MALT BEVERAGES THAT ARE 40 OUNCES OR LESS; OR

27 ~~(V)~~ (V) POST ANY SIGNS ON THE EXTERIOR OF THE ESTABLISHMENT  
28 OR IN THE AREA DEDICATED TO THE SALE OF BEER AND WINE THAT ADVERTISE  
29 ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES.

5 REPRINT OF HOUSE BILL 1303 as amended by HB1303/123229/1 02/24/26 at 11:34 AM

1 4-303.

2 [A] EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN § 4-205.1 OF THIS TITLE, A Class A, Class B, or  
3 Class D beer license, beer and wine license, or beer, wine, and liquor license may not be  
4 transferred for use in conjunction with or on the premises of a chain store, supermarket, or  
5 discount house unless:

6 (1) the establishment already holds a Class A, Class B, or Class D beer  
7 license, beer and wine license, or beer, wine, and liquor license; or

8 (2) the license is transferred to a similar type of establishment.

9 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July  
10 1, 2026.

**[2026 - 02.24] HB1303 Amendment 263427 (MAY to SHA**

Uploaded by: Marlon Amprey

Position: FAV



**HB1303/263427/1**

AMENDMENTS  
PREPARED  
BY THE  
DEPT. OF LEGISLATIVE  
SERVICES

24 FEB 26  
11:10:17

BY: Delegate Amprey  
(To be offered in the Economic Matters Committee)

AMENDMENTS TO HOUSE BILL 1303  
(First Reading File Bill)

AMENDMENT NO. 1

On page 1, in line 4, strike “authorizing” and substitute “requiring”.

AMENDMENT NO. 2

On page 3, in line 14, strike “A” and substitute “**BEFORE A LICENSE MAY BE ISSUED UNDER THIS SECTION, A**”; and in line 15, strike “MAY” and substitute “SHALL”.

**[2026 - 02.24] HB1303 Amendment 263427 Reprint (MA**

Uploaded by: Marlon Amprey

Position: FAV

# HOUSE BILL 1303

A1  
HB 1379/25 – ECM

6lr2842

---

By: **Delegates Amprey, Boaf, Ruff, Solomon, and Spiegel**  
Introduced and read first time: February 12, 2026  
Assigned to: Economic Matters

---

## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Alcoholic Beverages – Class A License – Retail Establishments**  
3 **(Alcoholic Beverages Modernization Act of 2026)**

4 FOR the purpose of ~~authorizing~~ requiring certain establishments that operate as a food  
retailer,  
5 pharmacy, or retail service station to offer to purchase a Class A license from a Class  
6 A license holder under certain circumstances; authorizing the retail establishments  
7 to apply to a local licensing board for a Class A license under certain circumstances;  
8 and generally relating to Class A alcoholic beverages licenses for retail  
9 establishments that operate as a food retailer, pharmacy, or retail service station.

10 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
11 Article – Alcoholic Beverages and Cannabis  
12 Section 4–205 and 4–303  
13 Annotated Code of Maryland  
14 (2024 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

15 BY adding to  
16 Article – Alcoholic Beverages and Cannabis  
17 Section 4–205.1  
18 Annotated Code of Maryland  
19 (2024 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

20 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,  
21 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

22 **Article – Alcoholic Beverages and Cannabis**

23 4–205.

24 (a) This section does not apply to:

2 REPRINT OF HOUSE BILL 1303 as amended by HB1303/263427/1 02/24/26 at 11:09 AM

1 (1) an establishment that already holds a Class A, Class B, or Class D beer  
2 license, beer and wine license, or beer, wine, and liquor license; or

3 (2) a license holder that sells alcoholic beverages at discount prices.

4 (b) [A] EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN § 4-205.1 OF THIS SUBTITLE, A local  
5 licensing board may not issue a Class A, Class B, or Class D beer license, beer and wine  
6 license, or beer, wine, and liquor license for use in conjunction with or on the premises of:

7 (1) a chain store;

8 (2) a supermarket; or

9 (3) a discount house.

10 4-205.1.

11 (A) (1) IN THIS SECTION THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS  
12 INDICATED.

13 (2) "FOOD RETAILER" MEANS A RETAIL ESTABLISHMENT THAT:

14 (I) OFFERS FOR SALE FOOD PRODUCTS IN AT LEAST FIVE OF  
15 THE FOLLOWING CATEGORIES:

16 1. FRESH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES;

17 2. FRESH AND UNCOOKED MEAT, POULTRY, AND  
18 SEAFOOD;

19 3. DAIRY PRODUCTS;

20 4. CANNED FOODS;

21 5. FROZEN FOODS; AND

22 6. DRY GROCERIES AND BAKED GOODS;

23 (II) ACCEPTS SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE  
24 PROGRAM CREDITS AS PAYMENT FOR FOOD AND BEVERAGES; AND

25 (III) HAS A MINIMUM OF 4,000 SQUARE FEET.

26 (3) "RETAIL ESTABLISHMENT" MEANS AN ESTABLISHMENT THAT:

- 1 (I) 1. IS A FOOD RETAILER;
- 2 2. IS A PHARMACY OPERATED BY A PERSON THAT HOLDS
- 3 A PHARMACY PERMIT ISSUED BY THE STATE BOARD OF PHARMACY UNDER § 12-401
- 4 OF THE HEALTH OCCUPATIONS ARTICLE; OR
- 5 3. IS A RETAIL SERVICE STATION THAT SELLS GASOLINE
- 6 AND DIESEL FUEL OR HAS ON-SITE ELECTRIC CHARGING CAPABILITIES FOR A
- 7 MINIMUM OF SIX MOTOR VEHICLES SIMULTANEOUSLY; AND

8 (II) EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN DIVISION II OF THIS ARTICLE, HAS  
 9 A PRIMARY ENTRANCEWAY THAT IS AT LEAST:

- 10 1. 300 FEET FROM THE NEAREST POINT OF A PLACE OF
- 11 WORSHIP OR SCHOOL; AND
- 12 2. 100 FEET FROM ANY RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY NOT
- 13 LOCATED IN THE SAME BUILDING OR STRUCTURE AS THE RETAIL ESTABLISHMENT.

14 (B) (1) ~~A~~ BEFORE A LICENSE MAY BE ISSUED UNDER THIS SECTION, A RETAIL  
 15 ESTABLISHMENT LOCATED LESS THAN 3,000 FEET  
 16 FROM A CLASS A LICENSE HOLDER ~~MAY~~ SHALL OFFER TO PURCHASE THE CLASS A LICENSE  
 17 FROM THE LICENSE HOLDER.

18 (2) A RETAIL ESTABLISHMENT THAT OBTAINS A LICENSE IN  
 19 ACCORDANCE WITH PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION SHALL CONVERT THE  
 20 LICENSE, IF NECESSARY, TO A CLASS A BEER, CLASS A BEER AND WINE, OR CLASS  
 21 A BEER AND LIGHT WINE LICENSE, REGARDLESS OF THE TYPE OF CLASS A LICENSE  
 22 THAT WAS PURCHASED.

23 (C) (1) IF A LICENSE HOLDER DOES NOT ACCEPT A RETAIL  
 24 ESTABLISHMENT'S OFFER, THE RETAIL ESTABLISHMENT MAY APPLY TO THE LOCAL  
 25 LICENSING BOARD FOR A CLASS A BEER OR CLASS A BEER AND WINE LICENSE IN  
 26 ACCORDANCE WITH THE LOCAL LICENSING BOARD'S RULES.

27 (2) DEPENDING ON THE TYPES OF LICENSES AVAILABLE IN THE  
 28 JURISDICTION, THE LOCAL LICENSING BOARD SHALL ISSUE TO THE RETAIL  
 29 ESTABLISHMENT:

- 30 (I) A CLASS A BEER LICENSE;
- (II) A CLASS A BEER AND WINE LICENSE; OR

4 REPRINT OF HOUSE BILL 1303 as amended by HB1303/263427/1 02/24/26 at 11:09 AM

1 (III) A CLASS A BEER AND LIGHT WINE LICENSE.

2 (D) AN APPLICATION FOR A CLASS A BEER OR CLASS A BEER AND WINE  
3 LICENSE SUBMITTED BY A RETAIL ESTABLISHMENT:

4 (1) IS PRESUMED TO BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE COMMUNITY;  
5 AND

6 (2) MAY NOT BE DENIED FOR ANY REASON OTHER THAN A REASON  
7 TRADITIONALLY CONSIDERED BY A LOCAL LICENSING BOARD.

8 (E) A HOLDER OF A LICENSE ISSUED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS SECTION  
9 OR AN EMPLOYEE DESIGNATED BY THE HOLDER SHALL COMPLETE TRAINING IN AN  
10 APPROVED ALCOHOL AWARENESS PROGRAM IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 4-505 OF THIS  
11 TITLE.

12 (F) A HOLDER OF A LICENSE ISSUED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS SECTION:

13 (1) SHALL EMPLOY SWORN SECURITY PERSONNEL FOR THE PUBLIC  
14 AREA OF THE STORE DEDICATED TO THE SALE OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES;

15 (2) MAY SELL ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES BETWEEN THE HOURS OF 9  
16 A.M. AND 8 P.M., MONDAY THROUGH SATURDAY; AND

17 (3) MAY NOT:

18 (I) SELL ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES BY MEANS OF A  
19 SELF-SCANNING CASH REGISTER OR OTHER AUTOMATED SYSTEM THAT IS:

20 1. CAPABLE OF RECOVERING STORED INFORMATION  
21 RELATED TO THE SALE PRICE OF INDIVIDUAL RETAIL ITEMS; AND

22 2. OPERATED ON A SELF-SERVICE BASIS BY A  
23 CUSTOMER;

24 (II) DELIVER ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES;

25 (III) SELL INDIVIDUAL CANS OR BOTTLES OF MIXED COCKTAILS  
26 OR MALT BEVERAGES THAT ARE 40 OUNCES OR LESS; OR

27 (IV) POST ANY SIGNS ON THE EXTERIOR OF THE ESTABLISHMENT  
28 OR IN THE AREA DEDICATED TO THE SALE OF BEER AND WINE THAT ADVERTISE  
29 ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES.

5 REPRINT OF HOUSE BILL 1303 as amended by HB1303/263427/1 02/24/26 at 11:09 AM

1 4-303.

2 [A] EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN § 4-205.1 OF THIS TITLE, A Class A, Class B, or  
3 Class D beer license, beer and wine license, or beer, wine, and liquor license may not be  
4 transferred for use in conjunction with or on the premises of a chain store, supermarket, or  
5 discount house unless:

6 (1) the establishment already holds a Class A, Class B, or Class D beer  
7 license, beer and wine license, or beer, wine, and liquor license; or

8 (2) the license is transferred to a similar type of establishment.

9 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July  
10 1, 2026.

**[2026 - 02.24] HB1303 Amendment 643629 (LLB Geogra**

Uploaded by: Marlon Amprey

Position: FAV



**HB1303/643629/1**

AMENDMENTS  
PREPARED  
BY THE  
DEPT. OF LEGISLATIVE  
SERVICES

24 FEB 26  
11:06:07

BY: Delegate Amprey  
(To be offered in the Economic Matters Committee)

AMENDMENT TO HOUSE BILL 1303

(First Reading File Bill)

On page 4, after line 29, insert:

**“(G) THE LOCAL LICENSING BOARD SHALL LIMIT THE ISSUANCE OF A LICENSE UNDER THIS SECTION TO ONE OR MORE GEOGRAPHIC AREAS IN THE JURISDICTION THAT THE LOCAL LICENSING BOARD CONSIDERS APPROPRIATE TO LESSEN THE IMPACT OF THE DENSITY OF CLASS A LICENSEES IN THE JURISDICTION.”**

**[2026 - 02.24] HB1303 Amendment 643629 Reprint (LL**

Uploaded by: Marlon Amprey

Position: FAV

# HOUSE BILL 1303

A1  
HB 1379/25 – ECM

6lr2842

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By: **Delegates Amprey, Boafo, Ruff, Solomon, and Spiegel**  
Introduced and read first time: February 12, 2026  
Assigned to: Economic Matters

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Alcoholic Beverages – Class A License – Retail Establishments**  
3 **(Alcoholic Beverages Modernization Act of 2026)**

4 FOR the purpose of authorizing certain establishments that operate as a food retailer,  
5 pharmacy, or retail service station to offer to purchase a Class A license from a Class  
6 A license holder under certain circumstances; authorizing the retail establishments  
7 to apply to a local licensing board for a Class A license under certain circumstances;  
8 and generally relating to Class A alcoholic beverages licenses for retail  
9 establishments that operate as a food retailer, pharmacy, or retail service station.

10 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
11 Article – Alcoholic Beverages and Cannabis  
12 Section 4–205 and 4–303  
13 Annotated Code of Maryland  
14 (2024 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

15 BY adding to  
16 Article – Alcoholic Beverages and Cannabis  
17 Section 4–205.1  
18 Annotated Code of Maryland  
19 (2024 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

20 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,  
21 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

22 **Article – Alcoholic Beverages and Cannabis**

23 4–205.

24 (a) This section does not apply to:

2 REPRINT OF HOUSE BILL 1303 as amended by HB1303/643629/1 02/24/26 at 11:05 AM

1 (1) an establishment that already holds a Class A, Class B, or Class D beer  
2 license, beer and wine license, or beer, wine, and liquor license; or

3 (2) a license holder that sells alcoholic beverages at discount prices.

4 (b) [A] EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN § 4-205.1 OF THIS SUBTITLE, A local  
5 licensing board may not issue a Class A, Class B, or Class D beer license, beer and wine  
6 license, or beer, wine, and liquor license for use in conjunction with or on the premises of:

7 (1) a chain store;

8 (2) a supermarket; or

9 (3) a discount house.

10 4-205.1.

11 (A) (1) IN THIS SECTION THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS  
12 INDICATED.

13 (2) "FOOD RETAILER" MEANS A RETAIL ESTABLISHMENT THAT:

14 (I) OFFERS FOR SALE FOOD PRODUCTS IN AT LEAST FIVE OF  
15 THE FOLLOWING CATEGORIES:

16 1. FRESH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES;

17 2. FRESH AND UNCOOKED MEAT, POULTRY, AND  
18 SEAFOOD;

19 3. DAIRY PRODUCTS;

20 4. CANNED FOODS;

21 5. FROZEN FOODS; AND

22 6. DRY GROCERIES AND BAKED GOODS;

23 (II) ACCEPTS SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE  
24 PROGRAM CREDITS AS PAYMENT FOR FOOD AND BEVERAGES; AND

25 (III) HAS A MINIMUM OF 4,000 SQUARE FEET.

26 (3) "RETAIL ESTABLISHMENT" MEANS AN ESTABLISHMENT THAT:

- 1 (I) 1. IS A FOOD RETAILER;
- 2 2. IS A PHARMACY OPERATED BY A PERSON THAT HOLDS
- 3 A PHARMACY PERMIT ISSUED BY THE STATE BOARD OF PHARMACY UNDER § 12-401
- 4 OF THE HEALTH OCCUPATIONS ARTICLE; OR
- 5 3. IS A RETAIL SERVICE STATION THAT SELLS GASOLINE
- 6 AND DIESEL FUEL OR HAS ON-SITE ELECTRIC CHARGING CAPABILITIES FOR A
- 7 MINIMUM OF SIX MOTOR VEHICLES SIMULTANEOUSLY; AND

8 (II) EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN DIVISION II OF THIS ARTICLE, HAS

9 A PRIMARY ENTRANCEWAY THAT IS AT LEAST:

- 10 1. 300 FEET FROM THE NEAREST POINT OF A PLACE OF
- 11 WORSHIP OR SCHOOL; AND
- 12 2. 100 FEET FROM ANY RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY NOT
- 13 LOCATED IN THE SAME BUILDING OR STRUCTURE AS THE RETAIL ESTABLISHMENT.

14 (B) (1) A RETAIL ESTABLISHMENT LOCATED LESS THAN 3,000 FEET

15 FROM A CLASS A LICENSE HOLDER MAY OFFER TO PURCHASE THE CLASS A LICENSE

16 FROM THE LICENSE HOLDER.

17 (2) A RETAIL ESTABLISHMENT THAT OBTAINS A LICENSE IN

18 ACCORDANCE WITH PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION SHALL CONVERT THE

19 LICENSE, IF NECESSARY, TO A CLASS A BEER, CLASS A BEER AND WINE, OR CLASS

20 A BEER AND LIGHT WINE LICENSE, REGARDLESS OF THE TYPE OF CLASS A LICENSE

21 THAT WAS PURCHASED.

22 (C) (1) IF A LICENSE HOLDER DOES NOT ACCEPT A RETAIL

23 ESTABLISHMENT'S OFFER, THE RETAIL ESTABLISHMENT MAY APPLY TO THE LOCAL

24 LICENSING BOARD FOR A CLASS A BEER OR CLASS A BEER AND WINE LICENSE IN

25 ACCORDANCE WITH THE LOCAL LICENSING BOARD'S RULES.

26 (2) DEPENDING ON THE TYPES OF LICENSES AVAILABLE IN THE

27 JURISDICTION, THE LOCAL LICENSING BOARD SHALL ISSUE TO THE RETAIL

28 ESTABLISHMENT:

- 29 (I) A CLASS A BEER LICENSE;
- 30 (II) A CLASS A BEER AND WINE LICENSE; OR

4 REPRINT OF HOUSE BILL 1303 as amended by HB1303/643629/1 02/24/26 at 11:05 AM

1 (III) A CLASS A BEER AND LIGHT WINE LICENSE.

2 (D) AN APPLICATION FOR A CLASS A BEER OR CLASS A BEER AND WINE  
3 LICENSE SUBMITTED BY A RETAIL ESTABLISHMENT:

4 (1) IS PRESUMED TO BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE COMMUNITY;  
5 AND

6 (2) MAY NOT BE DENIED FOR ANY REASON OTHER THAN A REASON  
7 TRADITIONALLY CONSIDERED BY A LOCAL LICENSING BOARD.

8 (E) A HOLDER OF A LICENSE ISSUED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS SECTION  
9 OR AN EMPLOYEE DESIGNATED BY THE HOLDER SHALL COMPLETE TRAINING IN AN  
10 APPROVED ALCOHOL AWARENESS PROGRAM IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 4-505 OF THIS  
11 TITLE.

12 (F) A HOLDER OF A LICENSE ISSUED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS SECTION:

13 (1) SHALL EMPLOY SWORN SECURITY PERSONNEL FOR THE PUBLIC  
14 AREA OF THE STORE DEDICATED TO THE SALE OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES;

15 (2) MAY SELL ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES BETWEEN THE HOURS OF 9  
16 A.M. AND 8 P.M., MONDAY THROUGH SATURDAY; AND

17 (3) MAY NOT:

18 (I) SELL ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES BY MEANS OF A  
19 SELF-SCANNING CASH REGISTER OR OTHER AUTOMATED SYSTEM THAT IS:

20 1. CAPABLE OF RECOVERING STORED INFORMATION  
21 RELATED TO THE SALE PRICE OF INDIVIDUAL RETAIL ITEMS; AND

22 2. OPERATED ON A SELF-SERVICE BASIS BY A  
23 CUSTOMER;

24 (II) DELIVER ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES;

25 (III) SELL INDIVIDUAL CANS OR BOTTLES OF MIXED COCKTAILS  
26 OR MALT BEVERAGES THAT ARE 40 OUNCES OR LESS; OR

27 (IV) POST ANY SIGNS ON THE EXTERIOR OF THE ESTABLISHMENT  
28 OR IN THE AREA DEDICATED TO THE SALE OF BEER AND WINE THAT ADVERTISE  
29 ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES.

(G) THE LOCAL LICENSING BOARD SHALL LIMIT THE ISSUANCE OF A LICENSE UNDER THIS SECTION TO ONE OR MORE GEOGRAPHIC AREAS IN THE JURISDICTION THAT THE LOCAL LICENSING BOARD CONSIDERS APPROPRIATE TO LESSEN THE IMPACT OF THE DENSITY OF CLASS A LICENSEES IN THE JURISDICTION.

5 REPRINT OF HOUSE BILL 1303 as amended by HB1303/643629/1 02/24/26 at 11:05 AM

1 4-303.

2 [A] EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN § 4-205.1 OF THIS TITLE, A Class A, Class B, or  
3 Class D beer license, beer and wine license, or beer, wine, and liquor license may not be  
4 transferred for use in conjunction with or on the premises of a chain store, supermarket, or  
5 discount house unless:

6 (1) the establishment already holds a Class A, Class B, or Class D beer  
7 license, beer and wine license, or beer, wine, and liquor license; or

8 (2) the license is transferred to a similar type of establishment.

9 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July  
10 1, 2026.

**[2026 - 02.24] HB1303 Amendment 813429 (MD Beer Wi**

Uploaded by: Marlon Amprey

Position: FAV



**HB1303/813429/1**

AMENDMENTS  
PREPARED  
BY THE  
DEPT. OF LEGISLATIVE  
SERVICES

24 FEB 26  
11:13:37

BY: Delegate Amprey  
(To be offered in the Economic Matters Committee)

AMENDMENT TO HOUSE BILL 1303  
(First Reading File Bill)

On page 4, after line 14, insert:

**“(2) SHALL DEVOTE AT LEAST 25% OF THE PUBLIC AREA OF THE STORE THAT IS DEDICATED TO THE SALE OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES TO BEER AND WINE PRODUCED IN MARYLAND;”**;

and in lines 15 and 17, strike **“(2)”** and **“(3)”**, respectively, and substitute **“(3)”** and **“(4)”**, respectively.

**[2026 - 02.24] HB1303 Amendment 813429 Reprint (MD**

Uploaded by: Marlon Amprey

Position: FAV

# HOUSE BILL 1303

A1  
HB 1379/25 – ECM

6lr2842

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By: **Delegates Amprey, Boaf, Ruff, Solomon, and Spiegel**  
Introduced and read first time: February 12, 2026  
Assigned to: Economic Matters

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## A BILL ENTITLED

1 AN ACT concerning

2 **Alcoholic Beverages – Class A License – Retail Establishments**  
3 **(Alcoholic Beverages Modernization Act of 2026)**

4 FOR the purpose of authorizing certain establishments that operate as a food retailer,  
5 pharmacy, or retail service station to offer to purchase a Class A license from a Class  
6 A license holder under certain circumstances; authorizing the retail establishments  
7 to apply to a local licensing board for a Class A license under certain circumstances;  
8 and generally relating to Class A alcoholic beverages licenses for retail  
9 establishments that operate as a food retailer, pharmacy, or retail service station.

10 BY repealing and reenacting, with amendments,  
11 Article – Alcoholic Beverages and Cannabis  
12 Section 4–205 and 4–303  
13 Annotated Code of Maryland  
14 (2024 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

15 BY adding to  
16 Article – Alcoholic Beverages and Cannabis  
17 Section 4–205.1  
18 Annotated Code of Maryland  
19 (2024 Replacement Volume and 2025 Supplement)

20 SECTION 1. BE IT ENACTED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,  
21 That the Laws of Maryland read as follows:

22 **Article – Alcoholic Beverages and Cannabis**

23 4–205.

24 (a) This section does not apply to:

2 REPRINT OF HOUSE BILL 1303 as amended by HB1303/813429/1 02/24/26 at 11:13 AM

1 (1) an establishment that already holds a Class A, Class B, or Class D beer  
2 license, beer and wine license, or beer, wine, and liquor license; or

3 (2) a license holder that sells alcoholic beverages at discount prices.

4 (b) **[A] EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN § 4-205.1 OF THIS SUBTITLE, A** local  
5 licensing board may not issue a Class A, Class B, or Class D beer license, beer and wine  
6 license, or beer, wine, and liquor license for use in conjunction with or on the premises of:

7 (1) a chain store;

8 (2) a supermarket; or

9 (3) a discount house.

10 **4-205.1.**

11 **(A) (1) IN THIS SECTION THE FOLLOWING WORDS HAVE THE MEANINGS**  
12 **INDICATED.**

13 **(2) "FOOD RETAILER" MEANS A RETAIL ESTABLISHMENT THAT:**

14 **(i) OFFERS FOR SALE FOOD PRODUCTS IN AT LEAST FIVE OF**  
15 **THE FOLLOWING CATEGORIES:**

16 **1. FRESH FRUITS AND VEGETABLES;**

17 **2. FRESH AND UNCOOKED MEAT, POULTRY, AND**  
18 **SEAFOOD;**

19 **3. DAIRY PRODUCTS;**

20 **4. CANNED FOODS;**

21 **5. FROZEN FOODS; AND**

22 **6. DRY GROCERIES AND BAKED GOODS;**

23 **(ii) ACCEPTS SUPPLEMENTAL NUTRITION ASSISTANCE**  
24 **PROGRAM CREDITS AS PAYMENT FOR FOOD AND BEVERAGES; AND**

25 **(iii) HAS A MINIMUM OF 4,000 SQUARE FEET.**

26 **(3) "RETAIL ESTABLISHMENT" MEANS AN ESTABLISHMENT THAT:**

- 1 (I) 1. IS A FOOD RETAILER;
- 2 2. IS A PHARMACY OPERATED BY A PERSON THAT HOLDS
- 3 A PHARMACY PERMIT ISSUED BY THE STATE BOARD OF PHARMACY UNDER § 12-401
- 4 OF THE HEALTH OCCUPATIONS ARTICLE; OR
- 5 3. IS A RETAIL SERVICE STATION THAT SELLS GASOLINE
- 6 AND DIESEL FUEL OR HAS ON-SITE ELECTRIC CHARGING CAPABILITIES FOR A
- 7 MINIMUM OF SIX MOTOR VEHICLES SIMULTANEOUSLY; AND

8 (II) EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN DIVISION II OF THIS ARTICLE, HAS

9 A PRIMARY ENTRANCEWAY THAT IS AT LEAST:

- 10 1. 300 FEET FROM THE NEAREST POINT OF A PLACE OF
- 11 WORSHIP OR SCHOOL; AND
- 12 2. 100 FEET FROM ANY RESIDENTIAL PROPERTY NOT
- 13 LOCATED IN THE SAME BUILDING OR STRUCTURE AS THE RETAIL ESTABLISHMENT.

14 (B) (1) A RETAIL ESTABLISHMENT LOCATED LESS THAN 3,000 FEET

15 FROM A CLASS A LICENSE HOLDER MAY OFFER TO PURCHASE THE CLASS A LICENSE

16 FROM THE LICENSE HOLDER.

17 (2) A RETAIL ESTABLISHMENT THAT OBTAINS A LICENSE IN

18 ACCORDANCE WITH PARAGRAPH (1) OF THIS SUBSECTION SHALL CONVERT THE

19 LICENSE, IF NECESSARY, TO A CLASS A BEER, CLASS A BEER AND WINE, OR CLASS

20 A BEER AND LIGHT WINE LICENSE, REGARDLESS OF THE TYPE OF CLASS A LICENSE

21 THAT WAS PURCHASED.

22 (C) (1) IF A LICENSE HOLDER DOES NOT ACCEPT A RETAIL

23 ESTABLISHMENT'S OFFER, THE RETAIL ESTABLISHMENT MAY APPLY TO THE LOCAL

24 LICENSING BOARD FOR A CLASS A BEER OR CLASS A BEER AND WINE LICENSE IN

25 ACCORDANCE WITH THE LOCAL LICENSING BOARD'S RULES.

26 (2) DEPENDING ON THE TYPES OF LICENSES AVAILABLE IN THE

27 JURISDICTION, THE LOCAL LICENSING BOARD SHALL ISSUE TO THE RETAIL

28 ESTABLISHMENT:

- 29 (I) A CLASS A BEER LICENSE;
- 30 (II) A CLASS A BEER AND WINE LICENSE; OR

4 REPRINT OF HOUSE BILL 1303 as amended by HB1303/813429/1 02/24/26 at 11:13 AM

1 (III) A CLASS A BEER AND LIGHT WINE LICENSE.

2 (D) AN APPLICATION FOR A CLASS A BEER OR CLASS A BEER AND WINE  
3 LICENSE SUBMITTED BY A RETAIL ESTABLISHMENT:

4 (1) IS PRESUMED TO BE IN THE BEST INTEREST OF THE COMMUNITY;  
5 AND

6 (2) MAY NOT BE DENIED FOR ANY REASON OTHER THAN A REASON  
7 TRADITIONALLY CONSIDERED BY A LOCAL LICENSING BOARD.

8 (E) A HOLDER OF A LICENSE ISSUED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS SECTION  
9 OR AN EMPLOYEE DESIGNATED BY THE HOLDER SHALL COMPLETE TRAINING IN AN  
10 APPROVED ALCOHOL AWARENESS PROGRAM IN ACCORDANCE WITH § 4-505 OF THIS  
11 TITLE.

12 (F) A HOLDER OF A LICENSE ISSUED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THIS SECTION:

13 (1) SHALL EMPLOY SWORN SECURITY PERSONNEL FOR THE PUBLIC  
14 AREA OF THE STORE DEDICATED TO THE SALE OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES;

(2) SHALL DEVOTE AT LEAST 25% OF THE PUBLIC AREA OF THE STORE THAT IS  
DEDICATED TO THE SALE OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES TO BEER AND WINE PRODUCED IN MARYLAND;

15 ~~(2)~~ (3) MAY SELL ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES BETWEEN THE HOURS OF 9  
16 A.M. AND 8 P.M., MONDAY THROUGH SATURDAY; AND

17 ~~(3)~~ (4) MAY NOT:

18 (I) SELL ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES BY MEANS OF A  
19 SELF-SCANNING CASH REGISTER OR OTHER AUTOMATED SYSTEM THAT IS:

20 1. CAPABLE OF RECOVERING STORED INFORMATION  
21 RELATED TO THE SALE PRICE OF INDIVIDUAL RETAIL ITEMS; AND

22 2. OPERATED ON A SELF-SERVICE BASIS BY A  
23 CUSTOMER;

24 (II) DELIVER ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES;

25 (III) SELL INDIVIDUAL CANS OR BOTTLES OF MIXED COCKTAILS  
26 OR MALT BEVERAGES THAT ARE 40 OUNCES OR LESS; OR

27 (IV) POST ANY SIGNS ON THE EXTERIOR OF THE ESTABLISHMENT  
28 OR IN THE AREA DEDICATED TO THE SALE OF BEER AND WINE THAT ADVERTISE  
29 ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES.

5 REPRINT OF HOUSE BILL 1303 as amended by HB1303/813429/1 02/24/26 at 11:13 AM

1 4-303.

2 [A] EXCEPT AS PROVIDED IN § 4-205.1 OF THIS TITLE, A Class A, Class B, or  
3 Class D beer license, beer and wine license, or beer, wine, and liquor license may not be  
4 transferred for use in conjunction with or on the premises of a chain store, supermarket, or  
5 discount house unless:

6 (1) the establishment already holds a Class A, Class B, or Class D beer  
7 license, beer and wine license, or beer, wine, and liquor license; or

8 (2) the license is transferred to a similar type of establishment.

9 SECTION 2. AND BE IT FURTHER ENACTED, That this Act shall take effect July  
10 1, 2026.

**[2026 - 03.04] HB1303 (Alcoholic Beverages Moderni**

Uploaded by: Marlon Amprey

Position: FAV

MARLON AMPREY  
*Legislative District 40*  
Baltimore City

DEPUTY MAJORITY WHIP

Economic Matters Committee



The Maryland House of Delegates  
6 Bladen Street, Room 314  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401  
410-841-3520  
800-492-7122 Ext. 3520  
Marlon.Amprey@house.maryland.gov

THE MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

**March 4, 2026**

Chair Valderrama  
Vice Chair Charkoudian  
House Economic Matters Committee  
6 Bladen Street  
Annapolis, MD 21401

**FAV Written Testimony for HB1303 Alcoholic Beverages Modernization Act of 2026**

Dear Chair Valderrama, Vice Chair Charkoudian, and Members of the House Economic Matters Committee,

HB1303, the Alcoholic Beverages Modernization Act of 2026, updates Maryland's alcoholic beverages law to create a clear, regulated pathway for food retailers, pharmacies, or retail service stations to obtain a Class A beer or Class A beer and wine license under certain conditions.

Under current Maryland law, a Class A license is generally limited to dedicated liquor stores and beer/wine specialty shops. Section 4 of this bill establishes detailed eligibility requirements a retail establishment must meet to qualify for an existing Class A license to be transferred or granted to them. A food retailer must offer a broad range of food products across multiple categories, accept Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, and meet a minimum square footage requirement. Requirements for pharmacies and retail service stations are also clearly defined, ensuring that only select, regulated businesses are eligible.

This bill creates a structured process for obtaining a license. A qualifying retailer located within 3,000 feet of an existing Class A license holder may offer to purchase an existing Class A license. If the license holder declines, the retail establishment may then apply to the local licensing board. The bill provides direction to licensing boards to consider traditional licensing factors and will issue the appropriate license based on what is available in the jurisdiction.

Importantly, HB1303 includes safeguards to ensure responsible alcohol sales. License holders will complete approved alcohol awareness training and employ security personnel in the area dedicated to alcohol sales. The bill limits hours of sale to between 9 a.m. and 8 p.m., Monday through Saturday, and prohibits self-scanning checkout systems, delivery of alcoholic beverages, exterior alcohol advertising, and the sale of certain products, such as individual cans or bottles of mixed cocktails or malt beverages of 40 ounces or less.

By clearly defining eligible establishments, outlining the licensing process, and incorporating operational requirements, this bill modernizes Maryland's Class A licensing system while maintaining regulatory oversight.

I urge a favorable report on HB1303.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Marlon Amprey". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Marlon" and last name "Amprey" clearly distinguishable.

Delegate Marlon Amprey  
40<sup>th</sup> Legislative District of Maryland

**HB1303\_Peterson\_FAV.docx.pdf**

Uploaded by: Matt Peterson

Position: FAV

**TO:** House Economic Matters Committee

**FROM:** Matt Peterson, Baltimore County

**RE:** HB1303 - Alcoholic Beverages - Class A License - Retail Establishments  
(Alcoholic Beverages Modernization Act of 2026)

March 4, 2026

**Position:** SUPPORT

Dear members of the House Economic Matters Committee,

As a member of Maryland's Jewish community, I have a particular interest in this legislation that goes beyond general convenience. Kosher-certified wine and beer are an important part of Jewish observance, used in Shabbat celebrations, holidays, and lifecycle events throughout the year. Unfortunately, independent liquor stores in Maryland frequently carry limited or no Kosher wine selections, leaving observant Jewish families with few local options.

Larger grocery stores, by contrast, have the purchasing power and shelf space to stock a meaningful variety of Kosher-certified products. Permitting beer and wine sales in grocery stores would meaningfully expand access to these products for Jewish families across Maryland, many of whom currently must travel significant distances or order online to meet their religious needs.

Maryland is one of only four states that still prohibits grocery stores from selling beer and wine, and nearly 80% of Marylanders support changing this policy. For my community, this reform is not simply about convenience, it is about equal and practical access to products that are central to our religious life.

Please support HB 1303.

Respectfully submitted,

Matt Peterson

Pikesville, MD

**HB1303\_Morris\_FAV.pdf**

Uploaded by: Micah Morris

Position: FAV

March 2nd, 2026

**TO:** House Economic Matters Committee

**FROM:** Micah Morris

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

**POSITION:** Support

I am writing to express my support for House Bill 1303 A Alcoholic Beverages - Class A License - Retail Establishments (Alcoholic Beverages Modernization Act of 2026).

Maryland families are already stretched thin. Between work, school, caregiving, and the endless demands of daily life, the last thing anyone needs is an unnecessary extra errand. Yet Maryland remains one of only four states that still prevents residents from picking up beer or wine at their local grocery store — an outdated restriction that the vast majority of Americans simply do not deal with.

The numbers speak for themselves. Nearly 80% of Marylanders support allowing grocery stores to sell beer and wine because they understand what this change means in practical terms — less time driving around, fewer stops, and a shopping experience that actually fits the rhythm of modern family life.

This is not a radical change. It is a straightforward update that brings Maryland in line with 46 other states and reflects the common sense values of the people we are asking you to represent. It makes everyday life a little more manageable for working families across our state.

I respectfully urge you to support this legislation and issue a favorable report on HB 1303.

Micah Morris

110 Elmwood Rd

Baltimore, MD 21210

# **HB1303\_Bodde\_FAV.pdf**

Uploaded by: Peter Bodde

Position: FAV

March 2nd, 2026

**TO:** House Economic Matters Committee

**FROM:** Peter Bodde, 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 writing to express my strong support for House Bill 1303 Alcoholic Beverages - Class A License - Retail Establishments (Alcoholic Beverages Modernization Act of 2026) and to respectfully ask for your favorable consideration.

Convenience is something every Maryland resident deserves. The ability to pick up beer and wine during a routine grocery run saves time that families and working individuals simply cannot afford to waste. Maryland's current restriction feels out of step with the realities of everyday modern life.

I have lived in several different parts of the country where purchasing beer and wine at the grocery store was an unremarkable convenience — one I would very much like to enjoy here as well.

It is also worth noting that this change would not spell the end for independent liquor stores. These businesses have and will continue to set themselves apart through personalized service, expert knowledge, and carefully curated selections. This legislation simply gives consumers greater flexibility and eliminates an unnecessary extra errand.

This is a commonsense reform that puts efficiency, practicality, and consumer choice first — which is why I urge the Committee to issue a favorable report on HB 1303

Thank you,

Peter Bodde

1605 Aliceanna St

Baltimore MD 21231





**Testimony HB1303 Beer and wine sales.pdf**

Uploaded by: Kirk McCauley

Position: FWA



## WMDA/CAR Service Station and Automotive Repair Association

Chair: Kriselda Valderama and member of Economics Matters Committee

RE: HB1303 Alcoholic Beverages - Class A License - Retail Establishments (Alcoholic Beverages Modernization Act of 2026)

Position: Favorable with Amendments (3)

My name is Kirk McCauley, my employer is WMDA/CAR, we represent service stations, convenience stores, and repair facilities across the state as a non-profit trade group established in 1937.

#### Amendments Requested:

- Remove - Page 2 line 25 (III) HAS A MINIMUM OF 4,000 SQUARE FEET.
- Remove – Page 4 lines 13&14 SHALL EMPLOY SWORN SECURITY PERSONNEL FOR THE PUBLIC 13 AREA OF THE STORE DEDICATED TO THE SALE OF ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES.
- Remove -Page 3 lines 6&7 AND DIESEL FUEL OR HAS ON-SITE ELECTRIC CHARGING CAPABILITIES FOR A 6 MINIMUM OF SIX MOTOR VEHICLES SIMULTANEOUSLY.

WMDA is in favor with amendments, “All Retail Business Modernization Act of 2026 – Leave No Business Behind” would be a better name.

Retailing beer and wine should not be a monopoly exclusive to current liquor retailers nor big box and grocery stores. Small business is what drives our economy, it makes no sense to exclude those retailers, should they choose to meet all other requirements of HB1303. Our stores are already in the neighborhood. While this would not be for all, the opportunity would be there for retailers that wanted to sell beer and wine and improve facilities to meet requirements.

The bill as written with security guard would remove any incentive to obtain a Class A License for a small retailer and a lot of big retailers. EV charging sites for 6 vehicles, this requirement looks like it was tailored for large locations only and is discriminatory toward small business as is 4000 sq. ft. Most current retailers of beer and wine do not have that Square Footage. Small business owners put their heart and soul into their business. Bills like this favor Wall Marts, Costco, and large retailers in general and blocks out small business as legislators pick winners and losers, That is Not Right.

Big box and grocery stores sell most of the products my members sell, including gasoline, why would small businesses be excluded? If you look at ATCC annual report for FY2025 there is hundreds of brewery's and winery's registered in Maryland [2025 ATCC Tax Annual Report](#) . They struggle with obtaining shelf space in stores, we can help that and give Maryland beer and wine a place to live.

Current sales of beer and wine by convenient retailers have not been a problem in counties where allowed and amending this bill with other requirements intact would benefit consumers, retailers and our beer and wine makers.

WMDA/CAR asks for a favorable vote with amendments on HB1303.

Kirk McCauley, 301-775-0221 or [kmccauley@wmdacar.com](mailto:kmccauley@wmdacar.com)

**HB1303\_MAPDA\_fwa (2026).pdf**

Uploaded by: Mike O'Halloran

Position: FWA



Mid-Atlantic Petroleum Distributors Association  
P.O. Box 711 ★ Annapolis, MD 21404  
410-693-2226 ★ www.mapda.com

TO: House Economic Matters Committee

FROM: Mid-Atlantic Petroleum Distributors Association

DATE: March 4, 2026

RE: **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENT – HOUSE BILL 1303** – Alcoholic Beverages – Class A License –  
Food Establishments

On behalf of Maryland’s convenience store marketers and energy distributors, MAPDA urges the committee to issue a favorable committee report on HB1303 with the amendment described below.

Simply, this legislation would allow a “food establishment” as defined in the bill to obtain a Class A license to sell beer and/or wine.

As the legislature continues considering the idea of expanding the ability of retailers like convenience stores to sell beer and wine, our industry only asks for the opportunity to compete for these licenses. Our stores serve thousands of customers each day to meet their daily needs – fuel, coffee, snacks, fresh food, and other items including many stores which meet the needs of SNAP recipients.

Allowing these retailers to sell beer and wine, if they choose, is a simple matter of fairness. Many of our stores serve as the primary grocer in their communities. Passing HB1303 allows them to add a new source of revenue so they can expand their offerings, provide better service, and raise wages and benefits of their employees.

Should the committee choose to move forward with the legislation, we ask the square footage requirement on **Page 3, Line 3 be amended to 2,000 square feet**. This important change would allow for legacy locations to compete for a Class A license. The other requirements – food product offerings, SNAP program participation, and distancing requirements – would remain.

We would also request the committee to **remove the requirement of sworn security personnel on Page 4, Lines 13-14**. Current liquor licensees do *not* have this requirement. It creates liability concerns and cost implications.

Thank you for your consideration. We urge the Economic Matters Committee to issue a **FAVORABLE WITH AMENDMENT COMMITTEE REPORT on HB1303**.

**Feeding and fueling the economy through gas, coffee, food, heating oil and propane.**

MAPDA is an association of convenience stores and energy distributors in Maryland, Delaware & the District of Columbia.

# **Testimony for an Unfavorable!!.pdf**

Uploaded by: Alfred Greenwell

Position: UNF

## Testimony for an Unfavorable Position of HB 1303

Members

The proposed legislation HB1303 will inflict more problems for our state at an expense we cannot afford.

National statistics show the largest cause of illegal sales of alcohol is accessibility, that's right accessibility.

The same national statistic shows that states with alcohol sales at big box store have 38% in underage sales compare to 14% in states with privatized licenses stores. Big box store at 38% compared to private retailers at 14% is a 171 % increase of underage or illegal alcohol sales our communities do not need.

HB1303 will come at an enormous cost, of 4.7 million dollars a year... 4.7 million dollars. A Maryland alcohol enforcement officer make just over 65,000.00 dollars a year, with the proposed increase of retailers from HB1303 there will be a demand for more liquor enforcement officers. Per the population parameters of the state, we will need to add an average of three officers per county, which will total up to 4.7 million in salaries each year if HB1303 is passed.

The proposed legislation will also cause increase in unemployment as it bankrupts small business across the state, as cutting the supply and demand pie too small it will over saturate the market area making it impossible for the small business retailer the ability to compete.

The writers of the 1978 Alcohol law knew we needed a law that could control alcohol sales, protect the community, and balance commerce.

Lastly, Id like to leave you all with a saying my grandfather told us,

If it ain't broke don't fix it.

Regards

A. John Greenwell



**HB 1303.OPPOSE.pdf**

Uploaded by: Angela Rose

Position: UNF



March 2, 2026

**Re: Opposition to 2026 House Bill 1303 — Alcoholic Beverages Modernization Act of 2026**

Dear Chair and Honorable Members of the Economic Matters committee:

On behalf of the Harford County Chamber of Commerce and our 700 + local business and non-profit members, I write to express strong opposition to House Bill 1303 (“Alcoholic Beverages Modernization Act of 2026”). While we appreciate the intent to modernize Maryland’s liquor laws, this bill—which would dramatically expand beer and wine retail sales into grocery stores and other non-specialty outlets—poses a significant threat to locally owned beer and wine stores and the small business economy throughout Harford County and across the State of Maryland.

Small, independent beer and wine retailers have been a bedrock of our local economies, often family-owned for generations, providing specialized knowledge, curated product offerings, and community engagement that larger retailers cannot replicate. These businesses operate on thin margins, reinvest profits locally, employ County residents, and contribute to the vibrancy of our downtowns and neighborhoods.

Expanding Class A licenses to grocery stores and other non-specialty stores under HB 1303 would undercut the very market that enables these local retailers to survive. Grocery and big-box stores, with economies of scale and deep corporate resources, would be able to absorb losses on beer and wine to attract customers, leaving smaller stores struggling to compete. In jurisdictions that have liberalized similar alcohol sales laws, independent alcohol retailers have faced closures or severe revenue declines due to intensified competition from larger retailers (i.e. Florida).

The Maryland Legislative Services fiscal notes and small business community testimony from similar proposals in previous sessions have identified that removing the limited licensing protections currently in place increases the likelihood of store closings and consolidation — particularly in economically vulnerable areas. While proponents claim consumer convenience, small specialty retailers contribute far beyond simple product

**FY 26 Board of Directors Officers**

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Andy Guckert  
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*Harford County Public Library*  
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Ron Fisher  
*Harford County Caucus of African America Leaders*  
*Fisher Financial*  
Robert Wehland  
*Freedom Federal Credit Union*

**President/CEO**

Angela Rose

sales, including serving as local economic anchors, supporting craft brewers and vintners, and preserving consumer access to diverse products that mass retailers often overlook.

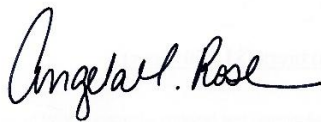
Moreover, HB 1303 threatens to shift consumer spending from locally owned enterprises to national grocery chains, reducing the circulation of dollars within the local economy. Research and community experience in other states show that when grocery stores obtain broad beer and wine sales privileges, small liquor and beer/wine stores are disproportionately harmed, with closures mounting as they fail to compete on price and convenience.

We believe that thoughtful reform of Maryland's liquor laws should protect small business owners and preserve local economic ecosystems, not disrupt them for the benefit of larger corporate entities. Policy changes should include safeguards — such as supply protections, licensing restrictions, and support for existing small retailers — that ensure local businesses are not displaced.

For these reasons, the Harford County Chamber of Commerce respectfully urges you to oppose HB 1303 in its current form. We welcome ongoing dialogue with lawmakers and stakeholders to explore legislative proposals that modernize alcohol laws while protecting family-owned businesses that are vital to Maryland's community fabric and economic resilience.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Angela M. Rose". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a faint, light-colored rectangular stamp.

**Angela M. Rose**  
**President & CEO**  
**Harford County Chamber of Commerce**

108 South Bond Street  
Bel Air, Maryland 21014  
Ph. 410.838.2020 Fax 410.893.4715  
[www.harfordchamber.org](http://www.harfordchamber.org)  
**www.harfordchamber.org**



**Blaise Miller 3-4-26 ECM written testimony HB1303.**

Uploaded by: BLAISE MILLER

Position: UNF

**B. K. MILLER MEATS AND LIQUORS, INC.**  
**9024 OLD BRANCH AVENUE**  
**CLINTON, MARYLAND 20735**

PHONE 301-868-2500

[BKMEATSLIQUOR@AOL.COM](mailto:BKMEATSLIQUOR@AOL.COM)

WWW.BKMILLERS.COM

**MARCH 1, 2026**

**ECONOMICS MATTERS COMMITTEE**  
**MARYLAND HOUSE OF DELEGATES**  
**6 BLADEN STREET**  
**ANNAPOLIS MD, 21401**

**DEAR MADAME CHAIR AND MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE,**

**I AM BLAISE MILLER, PRESIDENT OF BK MILLER MEATS & LIQUORS IN CLINTON, MD. OUR "STORE" HAS BEEN ON THE SAME CORNER IN CLINTON FOR 113 YEARS. IT IS A 4<sup>TH</sup> GENERATION SMALL FAMILY BUSINESS. WE CURRENTLY HAVE 51 EMPLOYEES, ALL WHO CALL MARYLAND THEIR HOME. ME, AND THOSE 50 GREAT EMPLOYEES OPPOSE HB1303.**


**I HAVE INVESTED IN MY BUSINESS WITH THE LAWS AS THEY ARE. ANY CHANGE THAT WOULD ALLOW GROCERY CHAINS OR CHAIN CONVENIENCE STORES THE PRIVILEGE OF SELLING BEER AND WINE, WOULD HAVE A HUGE IMPACT ON MY CHANCE FOR CONTINUED SUCCESS. BEER AND WINE ACCOUNT FOR APPROXIMATELY 40% OF MY ALCOHOL SALES. IT IS WELL DOCUMENTED THAT ALL ALCOHOL SALES NATIONWIDE ARE DECLINING. THE LEGALIZATION OF CANNABIS AND THE YOUNGER GENERATION'S LIFESTYLE HAS LED TO THIS DECLINE. THE PROVERBIAL "PIE" IS SHRINKING**

**I SUPPORT COMPETITION IN A FREE MARKET, BUT THE COMPETITION MUST BE FAIR. SUPPLIERS HAVE ESTABLISHED UNFAIR PRICING MODELS FOR A SELECT FEW CHAINS. THE FTC CURRENTLY HAS A CASE AGAINST SOUTHERN GLAZERS (ONE OF MY LARGEST DISTRIBUTORS) FOR GIVING WALMART A PRICING ADVANTAGE.**

**SMALL FAMILY BUSINESSES LIKE MINE HAVE A GOOD COMMUNITY PRESENCE AS WELL. THIS WEEK BK MILLER'S WILL PRESENT \$15,000.00 CHECKS TO THE CLINTON VFD AND FREDERICK DOUGLASS HIGH SCHOOL IN UPPER MARLBORO.**

**FINALLY, MY SON COLT IS 38 YEARS OLD AND WANTS TO CONTINUE THE BUSINESS HIS GREAT GRANDAD STARTED. PLEASE PROTECT HIM AND OTHER SMALL BUSINESSES BY OPPOSING THIS BILL.**

**RESPECTFULLY,**  
**BK (BLAISE) MILLER**



# **MD Beer and Wine in Grocery Stores Opposition Lett**

Uploaded by: Emily Smith

Position: UNF



March 4, 2026

The Honorable Kriselda Valderrama, Chair  
The Honorable Lorig Charkoudian, Vice-Chair  
Maryland House Economic Matters Committee  
230 Taylor House Office Building  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Dear Delegates Valderrama and Charkoudian:

This testimony is submitted on behalf of the Distilled Spirits Council of the United States, a national trade association representing producers and marketers of distilled spirits in the United States in opposition HB 1303, which would allow a food retailer to purchase or receive a license to sell beer and wine. We oppose this legislation on the basis that it would expand retail access for only beer and wine products thereby creating an unlevel playing field that leaves spirits products at a competitive disadvantage.

Allowing grocery stores to sell beer and wine will negatively impact the sales of spirits and thus the local businesses that produce and sell spirits, as well as Maryland spirits consumers. HB 1303 would allow grocery stores to purchase a nearby package store license, but then only sell beer and wine, which would reduce the number of outlets selling distilled spirits outright. In doing so, it would punish Maryland spirits consumers and businesses, including the wholesalers servicing those retail outlets and the roughly 35 Maryland distillers who rely on package stores to sell their products.

Additionally, under HB 1303, if a package store declines to sell its license to a grocery store, the grocery store is afforded a process that is skewed in the grocer's favor to receive a beer and wine license anyway. The process provided relieves grocers of the burden to show that granting the license is in the community interest; limits the ability of a retailer to receive full value for its license because a license acquired by a grocer would be limited to beer and wine sales only; and overrides the local community, depriving it from the opportunity to determine whether it is in the community interest to issue a license to a particular grocer or grocers. This process lacks fairness and any justifiable policy basis.

Expanding retail access for beer and wine to grocery stores would take consumers out of retail package stores. As foot traffic in Maryland package stores is reduced, fewer people will

**Distilled Spirits Council of the U.S.**  
**101 Constitution Ave NW, Suite 350W**  
**Washington, DC 20001**

purchase spirits when they can easily buy beer and wine in grocery stores. Between lost sales across all categories, the average package store would lose a substantial portion of their total annual revenue.

In Tennessee, which allowed wine in grocery stores in 2016, package stores sales went down over 9%, spirits volumes declined approximately 4.5% lower than they otherwise would have been and the state lost roughly \$3.6 million in tax revenue. We project Maryland would realize similar if not even more significant negative effects because the spirits excise tax rate is so much higher than the wine and beer tax rates (\$5.03/gallon for spirits versus only \$1.48/gallon for wine and \$0.55/gallon for beer) and because beer access would also be expanded under the bill. In short, any policy that favors beer and wine over spirits is simply not a good business proposition for the Maryland Treasury.

We believe Maryland consumers deserve convenient access to their beverage alcohol products of choice equally, whether it is beer, wine, or spirits. Discriminating between or among spirits and wine or beer does not make good public policy. It is a scientific fact that “alcohol is alcohol” regardless of the form in which it is consumed. According to the U.S. Dietary Guidelines for Americans, a “drink-equivalent” is defined as 1.5 fluid ounces of distilled spirits (40 percent alcohol), 12 fluid ounces of regular beer (5 percent alcohol), or five fluid ounces of wine (12 percent alcohol). In these serving sizes, one drink, whether spirits, beer or wine, contains 0.6 fluid ounces of alcohol.

We strongly urge the Committee not to advance HB 1303 which tilts Maryland’s marketplace strongly in favor of beer and wine products to the detriment of distilled spirits consumers, retailers, distributors, and distillers. As you are considering any reforms to the alcohol marketplace, we urge you to support policies that will provide a fair marketplace and give consumers convenience without picking economic winners and losers.

We appreciate your consideration of our views. Should you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to contact me or our Maryland counsel Hannah Garagiola.

Sincerely,



Emily Smith  
Vice President State Public Policy  
[Emily.Smith@distilledspirits.org](mailto:Emily.Smith@distilledspirits.org)  
(202) 682-8802

cc: Members of the House Economic Matters Committee

**Public Health Law Clinic\_HB1303\_OPP.pdf**

Uploaded by: Kathleen Hoke

Position: UNF

# Public Health Law Clinic

Professor Kathi Hoke, Director  
University of Maryland Carey School of Law  
[publichealth@law.umaryland.edu](mailto:publichealth@law.umaryland.edu)  
410-706-1294

## **Testimony in Opposition to House Bill 1303**

Alcoholic Beverages - Class A License –Retailer Establishments  
(Alcoholic Beverages Modernization Act of 2026)  
*Before the Economic Matters Committee: March 4, 2026*

The Public Health Law Clinic submits this testimony in opposition to House Bill 1303 because it increases access to alcohol by expanding sales to myriad retail establishments, including many where parents bring children, where teens often shop, and where people who have achieved sobriety or are working toward sobriety shop for essentials.

House Bill 1303 creates an exception to Maryland’s prohibition on issuing Class A alcoholic beverages licenses to chain stores, supermarkets, and discount houses. The bill authorizes certain retailers, including food retailers, defined as establishments of at least 4,000 square feet that sell food in multiple categories and accept SNAP benefits; pharmacies; and gas stations to offer to purchase a Class A license from a license holder within 3,000 feet at fair market value. If the license holder declines the offer, the food retailer may apply to the local licensing board for a Class A beer or beer and wine license. Notably, the bill provides that an application by a retailer is presumed to be in the best interest of the community. Maryland’s existing laws prohibiting alcohol sales at these establishments that serve families, teens, and those in recovery or working toward sobriety actually serve the best interests of the community and should be maintained.

## **Public Health Harms of Increased Alcohol Access**

When alcohol becomes easier to access in retail establishments, per capita alcohol consumption increases.<sup>1</sup> This correlation between access and consumption is not unique to any community or population, though many marginalized communities already suffer from oversaturation of retail alcohol outlets and the negative impact of the ready availability of alcohol. Given the negative public health consequences that can be caused by alcohol consumption, public health guidance recommends limiting where, when, and to whom alcohol may be sold.<sup>2</sup> House Bill 1303 aims to accomplish the opposite by creating a pathway for a broad array of retailers to sell alcohol for off-premises consumption, with a presumption that such sales are best for a community.

Alcohol outlet density is not only associated with increased alcohol consumption, but is also related to increased harm, including violence, injuries, and other health issues. Alcohol

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<sup>1</sup> Norman Giesbrecht & Daniel T. Myran, *Harms and Costs of Proposed Changes in How Alcohol is Sold in Ontario*, 196 CANADIAN MEDICAL ASSOCIATION JOURNAL 447, 448 (2024), <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC11001388/pdf/196e447.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> *Global Status Report on Alcohol and Health*, WORLD HEALTH ORGANIZATION (2018), <https://iris.who.int/bitstream/handle/10665/274603/9789241565639-eng.pdf?sequence=1>.

outlet density is associated with an increase in violent crime exposure—with each 10% increase in alcohol outlet access being correlated with a 4.2% increase in violent crime exposure.<sup>3</sup> This correlation between increased exposure to violent crimes and alcohol outlet density is more pronounced when the alcohol outlets are for off-premises consumption. Access to alcohol outlets for off-premises consumption is associated with a 37% greater incidence of violent crime compared to access to on-premises outlets.<sup>4</sup> The most frequently investigated alcohol-related incidents are assault, with alcohol outlet density being recognized as a community characteristic associated with high rates of firearm assault—so much so that reducing off-premises alcohol outlet density may reduce firearm violence.<sup>5</sup> The increase in violence also reflects an increase in homicides, domestic violence incidents, and child abuse.<sup>6</sup>

In addition to an increase in violent crimes, increased access to alcohol is correlated with an increase in injuries not stemming from violence, such as accidents and suicides. Alcohol has numerous effects on the body, often impacting mental alertness, level of coordination, ability to respond to hazards, and willingness to engage in risky behaviors—all of which contribute to an increased risk of bodily injury. Cities and communities with a high density of off-premises alcohol outlets—such as convenience stores or grocery stores that sell alcohol—are more than twice as likely to have high alcohol-related hospitalization rates compared to cities and communities with low density off-premises alcohol outlets.<sup>7</sup>

Excessive alcohol use is a leading and preventable cause of death in the United States. Approximately 178,000 people die from excessive drinking each year.<sup>8</sup> Among these deaths, about two thirds are attributed to chronic conditions, including several types of cancer, heart disease, liver disease, and alcohol use disorder, all of which develop from alcohol consumption over an extended period. However, even moderate drinking increases risks of cancer, heart disease, and early death—meaning that greater access increases harm, no matter the user.<sup>9</sup> Also included in these preventable deaths are fatalities from alcohol-related car crashes. Communities, especially residential areas, with greater alcohol-outlet densities experience higher alcohol-

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<sup>3</sup> Pamela J. Trangenstein, *Outlet Type, Access to Alcohol, and Violent Crime*, ALCOHOL, CLINICAL AND EXPERIMENTAL RSCH. (2018), <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC6214776/pdf/nihms-986850.pdf>.

<sup>4</sup> *Baltimore Liquor Stores Linked More to Violent Crime Than Bars and Restaurants*, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health (Sep. 26, 2018), <https://publichealth.jhu.edu/2018/baltimore-liquor-stores-linked-more-to-violent-crime-than-bars-and-restaurants>.

<sup>5</sup> Veronica A. Pear et al., *Community-Level Risk Factors for Firearm Assault and Homicide: The Role of Local Firearm Dealers and Alcohol Outlets*, 34 EPIDEMIOLOGY 798, 801 (2023), [https://journals.lww.com/epidem/fulltext/2023/11000/community\\_level\\_risk\\_factors\\_for\\_firearm\\_assault.6.aspx](https://journals.lww.com/epidem/fulltext/2023/11000/community_level_risk_factors_for_firearm_assault.6.aspx).

<sup>6</sup> David Fone et al. *Change in alcohol outlet density and alcohol-related harm to population health (CHALICE): a comprehensive record-linked database study in Wales*, 4 Public Health Research 1, 2 (2016), <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK350757/>.

<sup>7</sup> L.A. COUNTY DEP'T OF PUB. HEALTH, ALCOHOL OUTLET DENSITY AND ALCOHOL-RELATED CONSEQUENCES 7 (2022). See *Baltimore Liquor Stores Linked More to Violent Crime Than Bars and Restaurants*, Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health (Sep. 26, 2018), <https://publichealth.jhu.edu/2018/baltimore-liquor-stores-linked-more-to-violent-crime-than-bars-and-restaurants> (finding that off-premises alcohol outlets have a stronger association with incidents of violent crimes than on-premises alcohol outlets).

<sup>8</sup> *Facts About U.S. Deaths from Excessive Alcohol Use*, CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL AND PREVENTION (Aug. 6, 2024), <https://www.cdc.gov/alcohol/facts-stats/index.html>.

<sup>9</sup> Iona Y. Millwood et al., *Alcohol Intake and Cause-Specific Mortality: Conventional and Genetic Evidence in a Prospective Cohort Study of 512,000 Adults in China*, 9 THE LANCET PUB. HEALTH 956, 966 (2023), <https://www.thelancet.com/action/showPdf?pii=S2468-2667%2823%2900217-7>.

related crash rates.<sup>10</sup> Drunk driving crashes account for nearly 1/3 of all traffic fatalities in Maryland and within the past five years, nearly 800 Maryland residents have been killed in crashes involving an impaired driver.<sup>11</sup>

### **Impact on People in Recovery from Alcohol Use Disorder**

In addition to impacting the general population, greater availability of alcohol presents a uniquely harmful impact on those recovering from, or trying to recover from, alcohol use disorder. Environmental factors play a significant role in an individual's long-term recovery, and in order for there to be improvements in long-term recovery outcomes, there must be access to substance-free spaces.<sup>12</sup> However, increased alcohol availability—such as the sale of alcohol in grocery stores or convenience stores or pharmacies—negatively affects people in recovery, as it makes it harder for them to avoid triggers.

Today, someone recovering from alcohol use disorder has the freedom to walk into a grocery store and shop for necessities or a pharmacy to buy medication without confronting the very substance they are working to overcome. House Bill 1303 alters this reality by creating additional opportunities for alcohol sales in a broad array of retail establishments, making it more difficult to access alcohol-free public spaces.

Because individuals in recovery face higher relapse rates when alcohol is widely available in their communities, recovery groups emphasize that safe, alcohol-free spaces are crucial for long-term sobriety. By allowing many more retailers to obtain Class A licenses for beer or beer and wine sales, House Bill 1303 reduces the number of public spaces that do not present a trigger—putting the recovery of those with alcohol use disorder at risk in exchange for convenience.

### **Conclusion**

Increased availability of alcohol leads to higher consumption rates, creating several public health concerns including an increase in community and domestic violence and an increase in illness and deaths attributed to chronic conditions. Moreover, the greater availability of alcohol negatively impacts individuals recovering from alcohol use disorder by further limiting the number of public spaces that do not present a trigger. For these reasons, we request an unfavorable report on House Bill 1303.

*This testimony is submitted on behalf of the Public Health Law Clinic at the University of Maryland Carey School of Law, directed by Professor Kathi Hoke, and not by the School of Law, the University of Maryland, Baltimore, or the University of Maryland System.*

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<sup>10</sup> Paul J. Gruenewald & Fred W. Johnson, *Drinking, Driving, and Crashing: A Traffic-Flow Model of Alcohol-Related Motor Vehicle Accidents*, 71 J. OF STUD. ON ALCOHOL AND DRUGS 237, 237–38 (2010), <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC2841734/pdf/jsad237.pdf>.

<sup>11</sup> Impaired Driving, ZERO DEATHS MARYLAND, <https://zerodeathsmd.gov/road-safety/impaired-driving/>.

<sup>12</sup> Leonard A. Jason et al., *The Emergence, Role, and Impact of Recovery Support Services*, 41 ALCOHOL RSCH. CURRENT REV. 1, 7–8 (2021), <https://pmc.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/articles/PMC7996242/pdf/arcr-41-1-4.pdf>.

# **NCADD-MD - 2026 HB 1303 UNF - Retail Establishment**

Uploaded by: Nancy Rosen-Cohen

Position: UNF



**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>