

MARYLAND RETAILERS ALLIANCE

The Voice of Retailing in Maryland



**HB673 Consumer Goods – Restrictions Based on Energy Source – Prohibition
(Energy Equality Act of 2026)
Environment and Transportation Committee
February 18, 2026**

Position: Favorable

Background: HB673 includes provisions which would prohibit units of local government from restricting the sale of consumer goods solely on the basis of the energy source used to power the consumer good.

Comments: The Maryland Retailers Alliance (MRA) supports **HB673 Consumer Goods – Restrictions Based on Energy Source – Prohibition** and efforts to preempt local governing bodies from passing restrictions on the sale of consumer goods based on the item’s energy source. MRA has consistently opposed this category of local legislation, which in recent years have typically focused on gasoline-powered lawncare items.

In the case of gasoline-powered products, the lawncare market is already steadily moving toward alternative fuel sources as consumer interest is shifting. MRA has urged local governing bodies to allow the market to adapt naturally rather than restrict retailers from continuing to meet each customer’s needs in local, brick-and-mortar locations.

Local restrictions on the sale of specific goods within one county or municipality put retailers within that district at a competitive disadvantage. When a desired item is restricted within only one jurisdiction, customers will frequently cross borders to shop at other locations or will order goods on the internet as geographic sales restrictions are often difficult to enforce online. Customers may also react negatively toward physical retail employees when they cannot purchase items locally due to restrictions. Additionally, county-by-county restrictions can cause confusion and are administratively burdensome for chain retailers operating in multiple jurisdictions. Preempting local laws and applying the provision retroactively establishes consistent expectations for customers and retailers throughout the state and reduces competition between businesses operating in neighboring jurisdictions.

For these reasons, MRA would respectfully urge a favorable report on HB673. Thank you for your consideration.