



TO: Senate Finance Committee

FROM: Maryland Wineries Association ("MWA")

RE: SB 804 – Revisions to Heat Stress Standards

DT: March 11, 2026

Position – Informational

Chair Beidle and members of the Senate Finance Committee, MWA appreciates the focus on ensuring worker safety – we share that focus and prioritize it as well.

With that focus noted and agreed upon, we need to ensure that any heat stress standards are flexible so that we can achieve our challenging task of growing grapes and other Maryland agricultural products to produce Maryland wine.

The weather, disease, pests and other forces can require us to immediately tend to our crops. In order to be successful we need to be able to take action immediately and without hesitation or else we could risk losing our crops.

MWA believes that training and planning between our farmers and the Department of Labor ("DOL") can be sufficient to achieve the goals of protecting worker safety and ensuring that we can effectively tend to our crops. We are willing to work with DOL to develop standards, training and guidelines. We want to both reduce the risk of heat stress to our workers and ensure that our crops may be effectively tended to.

We have concerns that codifying these standards, without certain training, planning and direction, would create a rigidity that could cause challenges when our crops are at their most vulnerable.

Our request is that we work with the DOL to develop industry specific training programs to ensure that these rules and regulations may work cohesively with our agricultural needs while planning for and addressing some of the most common risks to our workers.

Thank you for considering our views and we look forward to working with the Committee on this important matter.

Sincerely,

Pam Giganti, Chair of the MWA Government Affairs Committee