

February 16th, 2026

TO: Senate Finance Committee
FROM: Michael J. Bates, Baltimore City, Maryland
RE: Senate Bill 75 - Alcoholic Beverages - Class A License - Food Retailers
POSITION: Support

Chair Beidle, Vice Chair Hayes, and Members of the Committee, I am writing to request your support for Senate Bill 75 - Alcoholic Beverages - Class A License - Food Retailers (SB0075).

Maryland's prohibition of beer and wine sales at local grocery stores is holding our communities back. Our leaders should be doing everything within their power to improve conditions for grocery stores that offer a variety of foods, products and services to Marylanders. Unfortunately, **the existing prohibition makes it harder for grocery stores to operate, especially considering the razor-thin margins that grocery retailers operate at.**

Allowing beer and wine to be sold at grocery stores is one meaningful way legislators can help to prevent grocery store closures while incentivizing the opening of new grocery stores. In communities across Maryland, we have neighborhoods that lack access to grocery stores with fresh food - it is long past time for us to work together to address and solve this problem.

For these reasons, I respectfully request a favorable report on **SB0075**.

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