

OLS_HB999_Statement_v2.0.pdf

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March 30, 2026

Arch Watkins and Mark McLaughlin

Regarding HB999, Class 9 Limited Distillery License - Alteration

Chair, Vice Chair, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of HB 999, legislation amending the Class 9 Limited Distillery License. Former aviators in the Navy and current neighbors in the City, we opened the doors to the distillery nine years ago, in February, 2017. Old Line is a Class 9 holder focusing on the production of high quality American Single Malt Whiskey, aged Caribbean rum, and vodka, with a small Class D tavern open three days a week to the public.

HB999 would allow holders of the Class 9 Limited Distillery License to contract distill spirits for entities in small quantities. This alteration is critical to Class 9 holders, like Old Line, as we seek additional revenue channels in an increasingly challenging commercial environment. The ability to contract distill in small quantities would allow us to more efficiently utilize labor and equipment, making an economic case for hiring additional distillers and bottling employees and for purchasing additional manufacturing equipment.

Additionally, we have been approached in the past by small brand owners looking for a small run of their product as a proof of concept. These entrepreneurs often don't meet minimum production requirement for many Class 1 distilleries who don't want to go through the admin and operational hassle associated with small runs. Under current licensing restrictions, we have had to turn these potential manufacturing customers away, and as a result, these emerging Maryland brands look out of state for their production needs - to the detriment of capable local manufactures and the state, who is losing the additional revenue and the loss of a potential nascent Maryland brand. HB999 would create a marketplace in this small batch contract production capability.

Thank you for your consideration.

Respectfully submitted,

Arch Watkins and Mark McLaughlin

Co-founders / Old Line Spirits

Baltimore, MD