

Madam Chair and members of the Committee

I am Tien-Seng Chiu, owner of Far Eastern Shore Winery, located in Easton, Maryland, where I reside.

I take a “favorable” position on this Senate Bill 0803

Maryland Class 4 Winery law permits us to make wine not only from grapes, but from other types of Maryland fruit and agricultural product, such as honey, peaches, or watermelon¹.

Brandy is a distilled spirit made from distilling wine of any sort². Wine is heated and the alcohol boiled off and condensed into spirits, and that’s called brandy.

Current Maryland law states that a Class 4 Limited Winery License Holder may ... distill and bottle pomace brandy³. And defines, pomace brandy is defined as “brandy that is distilled from the pulpy residue of wine pressing, including the skins, pips, and stalks of grapes.”⁴

Therefore, a winery that takes mead (a wine made from honey) or watermelon wine and distills it, is not making “pomace brandy”, but “brandy”.

Thank you for your time and this opportunity to show my support for this legislation.

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¹ Layton’s Chance in Vienna has a delightful watermelon wine.

² Federal Gov’t definition of brandy is 27 CFR, Chapter I, Subchapter A, Part 5.145, “Brandy” is spirits that are distilled from the fermented juice, mash, or wine of fruit, or from the residue thereof...”

³ Maryland Law allowing production of Pomace Brandy is found at (2-206.C.1.i.2)

⁴ Maryland Law defines Pomace Brandy in 1-101.bb