

Written Testimony in Opposition to SB0972

Senate Bill 0972 – Baltimore City 40th Alcoholic Beverages District – Authorizations and Revisions

Dear Chair and Members of the Committee,

My name is **William Jackson**, and I am writing to respectfully express my concerns regarding Senate Bill 0972, sponsored by Senator Hayes, which proposes reducing the operating hours of certain alcohol-serving establishments in Baltimore City's 40th District from **6:00 AM – 2:00 AM** to **10:00 AM – 10:00 PM**.

I am speaking in support of Pratt Liquor & Bar, a small local business that has been serving the community responsibly for many years. The proposed reduction in operating hours would have a severe and unfair impact on this business, its employees, and its customers.

This establishment appears to have been placed under scrutiny due to the high crime rates in the 40th District of Baltimore City. However, these crimes were not necessarily caused by the business itself. From a safety perspective, the owners of Pratt Liquor & Bar have taken serious and proactive steps to improve security, including hiring armed security personnel to ensure a safe environment for customers and the surrounding neighborhood.

Reducing the operating hours of this specific business does not address the broader issue of crime within the city. It is not fair to single out one small business for restrictions while other liquor stores located only a few blocks away continue operating later hours without the same limitations. Such selective enforcement places an unnecessary burden on one establishment while doing little to meaningfully address public safety concerns.

The proposed change from 6:00 AM – 2:00 AM to 10:00 AM – 10:00 PM would drastically reduce the business's ability to operate, potentially leading to financial hardship for the owner, loss of income for employees, and inconvenience for loyal customers who rely on the store. Small businesses like Pratt Liquor & Bar play an important role in Baltimore's local economy, and policies that disproportionately harm them should be carefully reconsidered.

Pratt Liquor & Bar has demonstrated a commitment to being a responsible and proactive member of the community by taking additional measures to maintain safety

and order. Penalizing the business now for issues that have already been addressed is both unfair and ineffective as a crime reduction strategy.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to reconsider or oppose SB0972 as currently written and allow Pratt Liquor & Bar to continue operating under its current permitted hours.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

William Jackson