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**Reference: HB0954 | MVBA OPPOSED  
(Cross-filed with SB0328 | MVBA OPPOSED)**

January 27, 2020

The Honorable Senator Cory McCray  
Maryland State Senate  
Miller Senate Office Building, Room 221  
11 Bladen Street  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Sent via e-mail: [cory.mccray@senate.state.md.us](mailto:cory.mccray@senate.state.md.us)

Reference: **Opposition to Senate Bill 328 | Baltimore City | 45<sup>th</sup> District Alcoholic Beverages | Exchange of Class B Beer, Wine and Liquor License for Aloha Sushi & Aloha Liquors 1218-1220 N. Charles Street, Baltimore, MD 21201**

Dear Senator McCray:

At our recent January meeting, the voting members of the board of the Mount Vernon-Belvedere Improvement Association (MVBA) voted unanimously to oppose the exchange of a Class B Beer, Wine and Liquor License for a Class BD7 Beer, Wine and Liquor License on behalf of any Class B license holder in the Mount Vernon-Belvedere community and specifically for the referenced applicant, Aloha Tokyo, Inc. T/A Aloha Sushi & Aloha Liquors located at 1218 and 1220 N. Charles Street, Baltimore, MD 21201.

As previously discussed via telephone, Aloha Sushi & Aloha Liquors has a *10-year track record of using a Class B restaurant license* for their package store at 1220 N. Charles Street, despite numerous complaints to the Liquor Board by the MVBA and a protest hearing requested by concerned neighbors. The approval of this bill for exchanging a Class B license to a Class BD7 license would further negatively impact other liquor license holders in the community who have complied with their license requirements because *Aloha would continue to operate a package store*—their purpose for requesting the BD7—without an appropriate license.

We believe that there should be an equal opportunity for license holders to be successful in their businesses and that one license holder should not have an unfair advantage over another. Class A license holders cannot sell on Sunday, yet Aloha Liquors has been operating a package store at 1220 N. Charles Street and selling for off-premises consumption 7-days a week for the past decade and would continue to sell on Sundays if granted a BD7 license. Additionally, the approval of this bill would set a negative precedent and potentially lead to a proliferation of other Class B license holders requesting their licenses be exchanged for BD7 licenses.



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At present, there is no demonstrated public need for this requested BD7 license within the Mount Vernon community.

Also, as mentioned during our telephone call, Douglas Paige, Executive Director of the Board of Liquor License Commissioners for the City of Baltimore, as well as Matthew Achhammer, Community Liaison for the Liquor Board, were previously informed of MVBA's opposition to legislation for changing the referenced Class B license to a Class BD7 for reasons outlined above. In fact, earlier last year, MVBA was informed by the Liquor Board that the establishment, Aloha Sushi & Aloha Liquors, had been requested to significantly alter their space at 1220 N. Charles Street to be in compliance with a B-class restaurant license. Subsequently, in late 2019, MVBA was informed that the owner(s) of the establishment were moving forward with their legislative request.

For the record, MVBA does not have an executed MOU with Aloha Sushi and/or Aloha Liquors for an exchange of their current Class B license for a Class BD7 license, as we are in opposition to this legislation.

I respectfully and formally request you please forward this letter of opposition for Senate Bill 328 to Chairman Paul Pinsky and Members of the Education, Health and Environment Affairs Committee.

Thank you in advance for your review of our information, and we urge you and the Education, Health and Environmental Affairs Committee to oppose Senate Bill 328. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at (410) 227-4853 or via email at [president@mvba.org](mailto:president@mvba.org).

Sincerely,

Michele Richter, President  
Mount Vernon-Belvedere Improvement Association

cc: Chairman Paul Pinsky and Members of Education, Health and Environmental Affairs  
Antonio Hayes, Senator of Maryland 40<sup>th</sup> District  
Eric Costello, Councilman of Baltimore City 11<sup>th</sup> District  
Robert Stokes, Councilman of Baltimore City 12<sup>th</sup> District  
Douglas Paige, Executive Secretary of Baltimore Liquor Board  
Matthew Achhammer, Community Liaison of Baltimore Liquor Board  
MVBA File