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Testimony in Support of
Senate Bill 534– Income Tax Credit – Wineries and Vineyards – Sunset Extension
Before Budget and Taxation
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The Rural Maryland Council **Supports** Senate Bill 534– Income Tax Credit – Wineries and Vineyards – Sunset Extension. SB534 would extend the current termination date for a credit against the State income tax for certain expenses related to wineries and vineyards from June 30, 2021 to June 30, 2026.

According to the 2020 Grow & Fortify publication, *Value-Added Agriculture in Maryland-An Economic Analysis*, in 2019, there were 105 licensed wineries in Maryland, working over 638 acres. The 2018 total value-added impact is estimated to be over \$200 million, supporting over 2,000 jobs and adding over \$10 million in combined state and tax revenue. Wineries are also contributing to an increase in tourism in the state, with 167,000 visitors annually, creating more than \$2.65 billion in total economic impact. This is helpful to areas such as Western MD that rely heavily on tourism, with western region wineries contributing \$71 million to the state economy in 2018, just behind the State’s central region, which contributed \$95 Million.

Wineries are a growing and thriving business in the State’s rural areas-creating jobs, fostering regional development, and contributing to the state economy. The Rural Maryland Council respectfully requests your favorable report on Senate Bill 534.

The Rural Maryland Council (RMC) is an independent state agency governed by a nonpartisan, 40-member board that consists of inclusive representation from the federal, state, regional, county and municipal governments, as well as the for-profit and nonprofit sectors. We bring together federal, state, county and municipal government officials as well as representatives of the for-profit and nonprofit sectors to identify challenges unique to rural communities and to craft public policy, programmatic or regulatory solutions.

“A Collective Voice for Rural Maryland”