

TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 12 - SUPPORT

Economic Matters Committee, Friday, February 12, 2021

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES-SALE OR DELIVERY FOR OFF-PREMISES CONSUMPTION

I am testifying in favor of this bill. I believe it is an excellent idea for two reasons.

I am testifying as an individual citizen, but I have served on the Howard County Commission on Aging for 6 years. During that time I have become increasingly aware of the challenges for older adults, who regularly list transportation as their top need for improved services. Many older adults do not drive or limit their driving to daytime hours. Home delivery can bring what they want and need to them and solves part of that problem. Allowing delivery lets them order a nice meal accompanied by a glass of wine or cocktail even if they cannot drive to their favorite restaurant, or they can entertain friends without going to a lot of work themselves. Allowing home delivery of individual alcoholic beverages provides a very helpful service for older adults and also for other residents who have impaired mobility. People over 65 make up a growing proportion of the population of my county and the state, so there would be a significant interest in such deliveries.

There is also a broader social reason why this is a good bill. We regulate alcoholic beverages because of the dangers of drinking too much. Allowing delivery of individual servings permits small households to enjoy a drink without buying a full bottle of wine or liquor that might encourage overconsumption and lead to bad habits. Requiring that food accompany the alcoholic beverage also reinforces encouragement of prudent consumption; this is a good feature of the bill.

I urge the committee, the full House of Delegates, and your Senate colleagues to pass this bill so that residents can enjoy a meal at home with a drink without the danger of overconsumption.

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