

Please Say NO to house Bill 996

My wife and I have proudly owned a Class A store in Baltimore County for the past 20 years. We entered into this business with the understanding that Maryland's Liquor Laws were established to enable **individuals** to acquire a Liquor License, and have for the past 100 years, held to that philosophy and principle. Local business owners, are now faced with the threat of out of town, conglomerates and corporations destroying what owners have built and invested in. This is very simply a case of **want** versus **need**. Corporations **want** to increase their profits by expanding their product selection. Supermarkets would sell lawnmowers and hiking boots if they thought they could make an extra buck. Local business owners **need** to protect their investment, employees, they **need** to protect their families and communities. There are 20 stores within 3 miles of our store that sell alcoholic beverages. If supermarkets, variety stores and convenience stores get licenses, that number would rise to 35. Do we really need to nearly double the places where underage consumers might be able to purchase alcohol?

Here is who will suffer if this bill passes:

*30% of all liquor store employees will lose their jobs...many have families

*Hundreds of locally owned stores will go out of business

*The consumer will lose thousands of choices of beverages to purchase, as corporations will decide on what products to carry, from corporate headquarters thousands of miles away from your neighborhood.

*Distributors will reduce their local sales and marketing teams by an estimated 50% as corporations order product from their far away headquarters.

*Local charities...local churches, cancer fundraisers, schools, local scout troops, local sports teams and many others that count on donations from local businesses.

Many of you who are charged with making a judgment on this bill may not be aware of the fact that in Maryland, sales of product to local stores is done in person, face to face, by a large staff of professional sales people. They will no longer be necessary if corporations buy from an out of town headquarters. Most of our salespeople have families.

During this health crisis environment, do we need to put more people out of work, close more businesses, and give our children thousands of additional outlets for alcohol?

Sincerely,

Allison and Stuart Doriss Owners 410-561-1122

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