

February 17<sup>th</sup>, 2021

Dear Delegate/Senator:

Hello. My name is Katie Wargo, and I am a lifelong resident of Pasadena, MD and currently serve as coalition coordinator for Northern Lights Against Substance Abuse, a community group that works to prevent substance abuse and misuse in the county, especially among youth and young adults. I am writing in opposition to Senate Bill 205 and House Bill 12 - Alcoholic Beverages - Sale or Delivery for Off-Premises Consumption, which we believe runs counter to our public mission of limiting easy access for alcohol to youth.

Based on our observations and experience as home alcohol delivery was made available on an emergency basis during the pandemic, we must oppose allowing home alcohol delivery in the county on a permanent basis, which will likely cause our county to have further serious problems with the sale and delivery of alcoholic beverages.

NLASA works together with three other coalitions across Anne Arundel County with support from the Anne Arundel County Health Department. We've worked closely with area schools, youth organizations, liquor stores and restaurateurs for years to ensure that staff and businesses to encourage responsible service and consumption.

This work is especially important to me because I have lost both of my twin brothers to mental health disorders and substance misuse. Like many of you and your constituents, I have experienced the loss and pain that come from losing many family members and friends over the last decade to this horrible disease. Prevention is now my passion, which is why I am addressing you with my concerns.

One major concern with home delivery is that it tends to allow both businesses and customers to throw aside many of the best practices that the industry uses to prevent underage sale and access to alcohol, including ID checks and observation about the customer's current state. It has been very difficult to determine whether delivery services are actually carding anyone who looks 30 years of age and under, as they would be required to in an establishment. Aside from ensuring that a delivery has gone to the correct address, most interactions today are not nearly as involved.

Our other major concern with home delivery is that once alcohol is in a house, minors who live in or are visiting the household will then have easier access to alcohol. With so many people already living in a COVID-19, socially-distant world, we also believe that legal measures that expedite alcohol delivery are actually encouraging further isolation that could easily turn into mental health issues or alcoholism.

I know that with COVID-19, the hospitality industry is doing everything they can to stay afloat, and that many establishments believe beverage delivery is a major assist in keeping their

doors open. While I understand that the temporary beverage delivery service is needed now, I do not feel like this is something we need to continue after all COVID-19 restrictions are lifted.

We are asking that you oppose these measures in the house and senate. If possible, we would ask that the Anne Arundel Delegation request that our county be exempted from the statewide bill. Please feel free to contact me if I can answer any question or clarify any information about this issue and our work with Northern Lights, and thank you.

Sincerely,  
Katie Wargo  
Coalition Coordinator  
Northern Lights Against Substance Abuse  
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