

**Testimony before the Maryland House of Delegates
Environment and Transportation Committee
in Support of House Bill 961
“Local Government – Lemonade Stands – Prohibition on Regulation by Local Law”
Given by Alexander “Xander” Alarie on behalf of himself, Christian Alarie, Isabella Alarie,
Alice Caroline Marriott, Andrew Marriott, Henry Marriott and Jack Marriott
February 19, 2021**

Mr. Chairman and Delegates on this Committee, my name is Xander Alarie, and I am a 9th grader at St. Andrew’s Episcopal School. I am giving this testimony on behalf of myself, my sister Isabella, my brother Christian, and my friends Andrew, Jack, Alice and Henry.

Thank you for the opportunity to offer our support for House Bill 961. We believe kids should have the freedom to operate lemonade stands in their neighborhoods without breaking the law and without being punished.

On a hot summer day in 2011, the seven of us kids, ranging in ages from two to twelve years old, opened a lemonade stand in our neighborhood during the US Open Golf Tournament. At first, we thought this would be a fun way to earn some money and to learn about running a business. We planned it all out, and my grandpa helped us build a pretty cool wooden lemonade stand using a wagon and a shower curtain.

As we started selling lemonade, a county inspector drove up and said that we needed a “permit for the sale of beverages.” He pointed to a thick code book, and told us he would return and could confiscate our lemonade if we didn’t shut down our operation. My mom called the county permit office and asked if we could quickly get a permit. They told her that it was not possible. So, we thought about what to do, and decided to give away the lemonade in exchange for donations to fight pediatric cancer. Later, the county official returned and fined our grandpa \$500. He told us we had to stop selling the lemonade, even if we were just giving it away in exchange for donations.

We felt sad and discouraged. It was even a little scary. My friend Jack asked if we would be sent to jail. Luckily, a county police officer directing traffic nearby was very kind and assured us that we were not in trouble. By this time, local news outlets covering the golf tournament heard what was happening and shared our story. Most of our customers and people walking by were upset that we were being told to close down.

By the next day, after our story appeared on multiple news outlets worldwide, the county had received a lot of negative feedback regarding their treatment of us and of our lemonade stand. A different county official arrived and told us that if we moved down the street a few yards, we could reopen our lemonade stand. He also agreed to waive the fine given to my grandpa. We were all very happy and relieved!

Over the weekend, we raised over \$4,000 to fight pediatric cancer. Later that summer, we visited Georgetown's Pediatric Oncology Unit to see the good that came out of our hard work.

Two of the lemonade stand kids are now freshmen in college and another is a college graduate. This experience occurred ten years ago, but made a big impact on all of us. We still talk about it whenever we see kids selling lemonade. We believe that the government's resources should be put to better use than going after kids who just want to sell some lemonade in the summertime. Through this experience we learned a little about running a business, about philanthropy, and about standing up for what is right. Also, having a lemonade stand is just a fun thing to do with friends. All kids should have the opportunity to run a lemonade stand. Now more than ever, kids in Maryland could use something fun to look forward to.

We hope that you will support this bill and make some lemonade out of lemons. Thank you for your time and consideration.