



February 16, 2022
Chair Wilson and Members of the
Economic Matters Committee
House Office Building, Room 213
6 Bladen Street
Annapolis, MD 21401

RE: HB854-SUPPORT

Dear Chair Wilson and Members of the Economic Matters Committee,

The Maryland Tourism Coalition is in support of HB854, which will create a new commission and fund to support Maryland's alcohol producers.

Our organization would be a potential beneficiary of competitive grants by the Commission to support our promotional programs designed to bring more tourism to these incredible destinations.

The Maryland Tourism Coalition is the statewide trade association that represents all sectors of the tourism industry. We have many members that this fund would benefit from. Maryland falls behind our neighboring states when it comes to promotional funds. Maryland current tourism budget is only \$10.6 Million compared to Virginia's at \$50 Million. For every promotional dollar spent, Maryland receives a return of \$31.

The fund would bring Maryland on par with neighboring states who provide annual support for research, education and promotion of the craft beverage industry.

The Maryland Tourism Coalition asks to please give HB432 a favorable report to support this industry that represents agriculture, land preservation, tourism, tax revenue and economic development in our community.

Thank you in advance and if you have any question, please feel free to contact me directly at 336-254-4648 or ruth@mdtourism.org

Sincerely,
Ruth Toomey
Ruth Toomey
Executive Director, Maryland Tourism Coalition