



February 16, 2022

Dear Members of the Economic Matters Committee & Ways & Means Committees,

My company, Shore Craft Beer, works to develop tourism around local craft beer, breweries, and craft beer related events on the Eastern Shore and across Maryland. We urge your support of HB854 to 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 Maryland and to the economically disadvantaged towns on the Eastern Shore.

Our efforts to promote tourism through craft beer events and the promotion of our breweries and our hotels, restaurants and bars particularly during the shoulder and off-seasons has already had an economic impact. A study just funded by the Rural Maryland Council shows that craft beer related tourism draws from a broader geographic region and brings people who spend money. More funds to help attract these valuable consumers could help grow our economic impact exponentially.

The fund under your consideration now would bring Maryland from behind to parity with neighboring states who provide annual support for research, education and promotion of the craft beverage industry.

Please vote in favor of HB843 to support this industry that represents agriculture, land preservation, tourism, tax revenue and economic development in our community.

Sincerely,

Ann McGinnis Hillyer
CEO & Founder

Shore Craft Beer, part of the State Ventures Group