

## Testimony of Lexington Market on behalf of Senate Bill 757

Thanks to the generosity of the State of Maryland, which has committed over \$9,000,000 to the project, work on the new Lexington Market is well underway. It will replace the aging Baltimore landmark with a state-of-the-art new market that will provide quality, affordable food to all citizens of Baltimore for generations to come. The new market will be home to approximately 50 market merchants, a mix of existing market vendors, and fresh food entrepreneurs. The market will focus on a healthy combination of staple foods (produce, meats, dairy) and prepared foods with extended hours to allow customers to access the market conveniently.

Lexington Market, Inc. fully supports Senator Hayes' legislation to increase the capacity of the Marketplace Liquor to over 1,000 persons to support the vendors at the new Lexington Market slated to open this summer. Passage of this bill will allow vendors in Lexington Market to offer alcoholic beverages that complement their menu and increase sales. By giving vendors the ability to sell alcohol, we will attract a new and diverse customer base to Lexington Market.

The revitalization of Lexington Market will be the catalyst for hundreds of millions of dollars of future development and investment in this neighborhood. The project will bring nearly 270 new jobs and a \$351 million economic impact to the community over the next decade. Projects in Baltimore's west side, stalled for decades, are starting to gain momentum – including the "Superblock" site – thanks to the city and State's cooperative leadership and commitment to Lexington Market.

We are grateful for the State's continued partnership and support for the project for many years and look forward to working together to see the transformation of Lexington Market through to completion.