

Testimony in Support of HB178

For Distinguished Members of the Senate Finance Committee

From Jannine Hughes
Cottage Food Business Operator
Frederick, MD

Subject Written Testimony in Support of HB 178

Distinguished Committee Members, my name is Jannine Hughes, and I am a home baker, operating a Cottage Food Business, and I would like to ask for your support for HB178.

My path to becoming a cottage food baker had a slow start. I first started when I was living in NC and did a few orders of cupcakes and decorated sugar cookies. I moved to MD towards the end of 2019 and to supplement my new income, I started advertising my business more. Even when the pandemic hit, I was still taking orders especially around holidays. With the encouragement of my friends, I have been taking on more orders and am planning on expanding to Farmers' Markets and teaching classes.

Unfortunately, the restrictive annual sales cap for Cottage Food will not allow me to grow my business. My dream is to take this full time and quit my 60 hours per week job. With the sales cap as it is, it is really hard to do this in MD with the rising costs of not only ingredients but housing and bills too. In order to go full time, I would need to hire help and I would not be able to do that.

Maryland's Cottage Food Laws currently limit annual revenue to \$25,000 making Maryland's law more restrictive than thirty-nine other states. This restrictive sales cap is unnecessary because the MD Department of Health has already determined what non-hazardous foods can be safely prepared in a home kitchen.

By supporting HB178 to raise the \$25,000 annual sales cap from Cottage Food Laws, you would be helping to make Maryland a great place to start or grow a small business.

Thank you.