

# **SB 904- Baltimore Alcoholic Beverages.pdf**

Uploaded by: Antonio Hayes

Position: FAV

ANTONIO HAYES  
Legislative District 40  
Baltimore City

Finance Committee



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THE SENATE OF MARYLAND  
ANNAPOLIS, MARYLAND 21401

Friday, February 23, 2024

**Testimony in Support of Senate Bill 904: Baltimore City – Alcoholic Beverages – Class B Beer, Wine, and Liquor Licenses**

Dear Chairman Beidle and esteemed members of the Finance Committee,

I am writing to express my support for Senate Bill 904, which would authorize the Board of License Commissioners for Baltimore City to issue a Class B beer, wine, and liquor license in certain areas: namely Ward 4, precincts 1 and 2.

The bill establishes the requirements for a holder of the license, including that the average daily receipts from the sale of food be at least 51% of the total daily receipts of the restaurant. Restaurants must be classified by the Baltimore City Health Department as high or moderate priority food service facilities. They must also have executed a memorandum of understanding with the Downtown Partnership of Baltimore.

Senate Bill 904 has provisions forbidding the sale of beverages on off-premises consumption and has regulations preventing the transfer for the license from its initial location. If a license is renewed, the license holder must file a renewal application including average daily receipts, an affidavit from a certified public accountant that verifies that license holder meets these requirements, and other information that the board requires. The Board may not issue a new license after June 30, 2028, but may continue to renew licenses issued before June 30, 2028.

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter, and I urge you to support the passage of Senate Bill 904.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Antonio L. Hayes".

Senator Antonio L. Hayes  
40<sup>th</sup> Legislative District – MD

**SB904-SUPP.pdf**

Uploaded by: Nina Themelis

Position: FAV



**BRANDON M. SCOTT**  
MAYOR

*Office of Government Relations  
88 State Circle  
Annapolis, Maryland 21401*

**SB0904**

February 23, 2024

**TO:** Members of the Senate Finance Committee

**FROM:** Nina Themelis, Director of Mayor's Office of Government Relations

**RE:** Senate Bill 904 – Baltimore City – Alcoholic Beverages – Class B Beer, Wine, and Liquor Licenses

**POSITION: POSITION**

Chair Beidle, Vice Chair Klausmeier, and Members of the Committee, please be advised that the Baltimore City Administration (BCA) **supports** Senate Bill (SB) 904.

SB 904 would reduce the requirements for obtaining a Class B (restaurant) liquor license within Baltimore City's downtown area. This initiative is a critical component of our broader Downtown RISE action plan, aimed at revitalizing our central business district during a challenging economic period and before significant developments, such as Harborplace, come to fruition.

Our current liquor licensing requirements impose significant barriers to entry for new and existing restaurants. Specifically, the high thresholds for capital investment and seating capacity, coupled with stringent food sales ratios, disproportionately affect smaller establishments and those looking to occupy previously used spaces without the need for substantial investment in infrastructure.

By relaxing these requirements, this bill would help to foster a more vibrant, diverse, and economically resilient downtown area. This will not only help fill vacant storefronts, thereby enhancing the urban fabric, but also stimulate job creation, increase tax revenues, and improve the overall quality of life for our residents and visitors alike.

The proposed legislation is crafted to sunset after four years, allowing the BCA to assess its effectiveness and make necessary adjustments moving forward. This temporary measure is a thoughtful response to the immediate needs of our downtown area, reflecting our commitment to adaptive, responsive governance.

For the above reasons, the BCA respectfully requests a favorable report on SB 904.