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BOARD OF LIQUOR LICENSE COMMISSIONERS
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March 13, 2017

The Honorable Joan Carter Conway
Chairwoman
Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee
Maryland State Senate
Miller Senate Office Building, 11 Bladen Street
Annapolis, Maryland 21401

Re: SB1086 – Baltimore City – Alcoholic Beverages – Residency and Registered Voter Requirements

Chairwoman Conway,

On behalf of the Board of Liquor License Commissioners for Baltimore City (BLLC) I respectfully request a **favorable report with amendments** for SB1086 – Baltimore City – Alcoholic Beverages – Residency and Registered Voter Requirements.


Currently, applicants for both a new and renewal license must be a Baltimore City resident for at least 2 years prior to application and a registered voter.¹ SB1086 would eliminate the local residency and registered voter requirements for all applicants for new and renewal alcoholic beverage licenses within the City of Baltimore.

The elimination of the local residency requirement and the imposition of a State residency requirement would align the BLLC with the policies of the Baltimore, Montgomery, and Prince George's Counties' liquor licensing Boards, while the removal of the registered voter requirement would align the BLLC with the policies of Montgomery and Prince George's Counties liquor licensing Boards. In addition, to aligning its policies with its surrounding jurisdictions, the BLLC takes heed of the concerns raised by the Maryland Court of Appeals regarding legislation that classifies persons by geography, which is accomplished by local residency or registration requirements, if the primary purpose of the legislation is economic. *Verzi v. Baltimore County*, 333 Md. 411 (1994).

For the reasons stated, BLLC respectfully requests a favorable report on SB1086 with an amendment requiring that an applicant for a new or renewal alcoholic beverages license must be a Maryland resident for at least 2 years prior to application.

Thank you for the opportunity to submit this written testimony. If you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me or a member of my staff.

Sincerely,


Albert J. Matricciani, Jr.
Chairman
Board of Liquor License Commissioners
For Baltimore City

¹ Alc. Bev. Art. §12-1401; Alc. Bev. Art. §4-103; Alc. Bev. Art. §4-104; and Alc. Bev. Art. §4-105.