

Maryland Senators and Delegates:

We, the undersigned organizations and businesses who care about consumer choice and economic development in Maryland, strongly urge you to pass HB 1260/SB 616, the Direct Wine Shipper's License bill.

This legislation would allow in-state and out-of-state wineries and retailers to purchase a license to ship wine directly to adults in Maryland. Licensed shippers must pay a yearly license fee, as well as Maryland excise and sales taxes. The bill requires wine shipments to be clearly marked as containing alcohol and prohibits persons under 21 from receiving direct-shipped wine.

HB 1260 will benefit Maryland consumers, wineries, wine retailers, small businesses, and our state budget in the following ways:

- Consumers will finally be able to ship home bottles of wine from wineries they visit, and order wines not (readily) available in Maryland.
- Maryland wineries will increase their sales and profits once they are allowed to ship wine direct to Marylanders and tourists.
- Passage of HB 1260/SB 616 will increase sales, profits, and the number of employees of quality retailers who establish direct wine shipping operations, and will serve as an economic engine for Maryland support businesses engaged in e-commerce and shipping.
- The collection of licensing fees and additional excise taxes and sales taxes from direct-shipped wine sales will result in badly needed revenue for the state. The added profits and hired employees for Maryland wineries, retailers, and e-commerce companies will result in more income tax payments to the state government as well.

The experience of the 35 other states that allow direct-to-consumer shipping, including Virginia, West Virginia, and the District of Columbia, has proven that direct wine shipping laws do not increase access to alcohol by minors, and that these laws are being enforced without difficulty.

For all of these reasons, we ask that you pass HB 1260/SB 616.

Sincerely,