



THE PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY GOVERNMENT

(301) 952-3820

Chairman

Mel Franklin

Councilman District 9

March 3, 2015

The Hon. Douglas J.J. Peters, Chair
Prince George's County Senate Delegation
James Senate Office Building, Room 120
Annapolis, Maryland 21401-1991

The Hon. Jay Walker, Chair
Prince George's County House Delegation
Lowe House Office Building, Room 207E
Annapolis, Maryland 21401-1991

Re: Prince George's County Delegation Bill Position

Dear Senator Peters & Delegate Walker:

It is my pleasure, on behalf of the Prince George's County Council, to transmit our position on pending proposed State legislation for the 2015 General Assembly Session. The Council met on February 24, 2015. The enclosed report reflects our position on PG 318-15 Alcoholic Beverages – Prince George's County – Seven Day Sales, which is being sponsored by the County Council.

This bill seeks to establish, in Prince George's County, a Class A+ license which will allow the holder of the license to sell beer, wine and liquor seven days a week for off-site consumption.

Over the past several years, the Prince George's County House Delegation has extensively studied possible changes to the laws governing alcohol-related licensing issues. Currently, Prince George's County is the only jurisdiction in the Washington D.C. region which does not allow stores to open on Sundays to sell liquor for off-site consumption.

The County Council considered many factors as we discussed pursuing this change in law. Most were satisfactorily addressed through information we were provided with from your offices. But, as you most certainly are aware, it is rare for a change in law to satisfy the needs and desires of all. As is often the case, some issues still remain. Plainly stated, under our plan, we would allow licensees who are currently authorized to sell liquor, the ability to apply for a license which would afford them the opportunity to make those sales during specific hours, seven days a week. However, this

bill does not provide that ability to those who are currently not licensed to sell liquor, that is, our Class D license holders, even though some have expressed an interest in having this same opportunity. How do we find the balance? The Prince George's County Delegation through two extensive Alcoholic Beverage Work Groups discussed this same dilemma. And, while we are intent on finding the answer, unfortunately, we are still challenged with how to reward those Class D license holders who have made applaudable improvements to their businesses, while keeping undisturbed the cap put in place by the General Assembly to regulate the number of licenses with off-sale privileges in this county.

Despite the absence of a panacea, the County Council requests your support in moving forward with PG 318-15 as there is a desire from both customers and store owners to allow some form of liquor sales seven days a week in Prince George's County. Further, PG 318-15 will recapture a significant stream of commercial revenue that is currently leaving our county and state.

We remain committed to working with you, as well as the Board of License Commissioners for Prince George's County to develop a system in the future that takes into consideration those businesses that might not benefit from a change in this law at this particular time. That commitment also extends to ensuring that businesses in this county maintain the high standards of quality this government has set forth.

The Council appreciates the opportunity to work together with you and your colleagues to address issues important to our citizens and the operation of Prince George's County. Should you have any questions or need additional information please do not hesitate to contact me. For your convenience my office phone number is (301) 952-3820. Thanks again, for favorable consideration of the Council's position.

Sincerely,



Mel Franklin
Chair

Attachment

cc: Hon. Rushern L. Baker, III, County Executive
Ms. Lisa L. Jackson, Director, Intergovernmental Affairs

RULES & GENERAL ASSEMBLY COMMITTEE REPORT

The Prince George's County Council met on February 24, 2015 with the following Members present:

Council Member Mel Franklin, Chair
Council Member Derrick L. Davis, Vice Chair
Council Member Todd M. Turner
Council Member Andrea C. Harrison
Council Member Mary A. Lehman
Council Member Deni Taveras
Council Member Obie Patterson
Council Member Dannielle M. Glaros
Council Member Karen R. Toles

The Council voted **9-0** for the following positions on these respective bills:



BILL CONSIDERATION

1. **PG 318-15** **Law Enforcement**
Alcoholic Beverages – Prince George's County– SUPPORT
W/AMENDMENT