

COUNTY COUNCIL OF PRINCE GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND
2025 Legislative Session

Resolution No. CR-003-2025
Proposed by Council Member Fisher and Blegay
Introduced by Council Members Fisher, Blegay, Oriadha, Hawkins, and Watson
Co-Sponsors _____
Date of Introduction January 28, 2025

RESOLUTION

1 A RESOLUTION concerning
2 Alcoholic Beverages – Licenses for Retail Grocery Establishments
3 For the purpose of stating a policy by the Prince George’s County Council and requesting that
4 the Prince George’s House and Senate delegations of the Maryland General Assembly support
5 local legislation allowing the Board (“the Board”) of License Commissioners for Prince
6 George’s County to issue a Class D beer and wine license to establishments in the Board’s
7 jurisdiction to sell beer and wine to individuals who are twenty-one (21) years old or older.
8 WHEREAS, the Maryland Code promulgates the sale of Alcoholic Beverages pursuant to
9 Section 26-102, and 26-1501 through 26-1509, Section 4-205 of the Annotated Code of
10 Maryland, (Alcoholic Beverages and Cannabis); and
11 WHEREAS, the Maryland Code currently prohibits a local licensing board from issuing a
12 Class D beer and wine license to a chain store, supermarket or discount house; and
13 WHEREAS, for the purposes of further identifying access points to fresh food, a food
14 retailer may be defined as a retail establishment that offers for sale food products in at least five
15 (5) of the following six (6) categories: (1) fresh fruits and vegetables, (2) fresh and uncooked
16 meat, poultry, and seafood, (3) dairy products and (4) canned foods, (5) frozen foods and (6) dry
17 groceries and baked goods; and
18 WHEREAS, in many neighborhoods, the closest grocery stores to the citizens of Prince
19 George’s County are in concurrent jurisdictions in the District of Columbia such as Ward seven
20 (7) and Ward eight (8); and
21 WHEREAS, many underserved communities must take public transportation which, often
22 times, means carrying groceries to and from the bus, walking in inclement weather crossing busy

1 highways, and enduring hazardous conditions where the sidewalks are often times nonexistent;
2 and

3 WHEREAS, walking and taking the bus are often the only forms of transportation and
4 many in the underserved community cannot afford Ubers or Lyfts; and

5 WHEREAS, according to the U.S. Department of Agriculture, residents in marginalized
6 communities experience food insecurity, which means lack of access to fresh fruits and
7 vegetables. In addition, forty percent (40%) of the County's neighborhoods are considered food
8 deserts, places with low access to food and unhealthy food accounts for fifty-five (55%) of those
9 communities' food outlets; and

10 WHEREAS, Prince George's County collaborated with Prince George's County House
11 Delegation of the Maryland General Assembly to commission a study ("the Study") and found
12 that neighborhoods with the highest density of liquor stores are within the Beltway and overlap
13 with food desert locations; and

14 WHEREAS, the Study also concluded that in Prince George's County, the areas that have
15 been hardest hit by the pandemic health-wise are the same places where the County has the least
16 access to primary care physicians and general healthcare. Moreover, they are also the same
17 places to have the least access to healthy food; and

18 WHEREAS, the Covid-19 pandemic contributed to a high number of co-morbidities such
19 as heart disease, diabetes and hypertension – diseases that could be exacerbated by unhealthy
20 food with high amounts of saturated fats, salt and sugar; and

21 WHEREAS, statistics indicate Prince George's County has two liquor stores per square
22 mile in many of its poorest neighborhoods inside the Beltway, while in wealthier, less dense
23 neighborhoods outside the beltway, there are an average of zero (0) point one percent (0.1%) of
24 liquor stores per square mile; and

25 WHEREAS, grocery stores with dramatically less access to healthy options in Prince
26 George's County are increasing becoming a health problem; and

27 WHEREAS, grocers may be attracted to local supermarkets if they also sold beer and
28 wine, providing a one-stop shopping experience; and

29 WHEREAS, Maryland is one of four states that prohibits the sale of beer and wine in
30 grocery stores; and

31 WHEREAS, economic data indicates that allowing beer and wine to be sold in grocery

1 stores would increase overall sales in Maryland by \$192.8 million, create seven hundred and
2 sixty (760) new jobs, and bring in \$24.1 million in additional tax revenues; and

3 WHEREAS, allowing retail grocery establishments to sell beer and wine incentivizes more
4 grocery businesses to locate and operate in food deserts and will attract new business to Prince
5 George's County; and

6 WHEREAS, polls show overwhelming support year after year for the ability of grocery
7 stores to sell beer and wine in Maryland.

8 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Prince George's County Council
9 requests the Prince George's House and Senate delegations of the Maryland General Assembly
10 support local legislation allowing the Board of License Commissioners for Prince George's
11 County to issue Class D beer and wine licenses to allow retail grocery establishments within the
12 Board's jurisdiction to sell beer and wine to individuals who are twenty-one years (21) old or
13 older.

Adopted this 8th day of July, 2025.

COUNTY COUNCIL OF PRINCE
GEORGE'S COUNTY, MARYLAND

BY: _____
Edward P. Burroughs III
Chair

ATTEST:

Donna J. Brown
Clerk of the Council