



YOUR LIVELIHOOD DEPENDS ON IT

As the Maryland General Assembly prepares to convene on January 10th, the imminent introduction of legislation allowing chain stores and supermarkets to obtain retail liquor licenses, along with another potential extension of direct shipment privileges by Maryland manufacturers (originally introduced during COVID-19) are sure to be in the legislative hopper. On page 8, Beverage Journal staff writer, Teddy Durgin, interviews industry insiders to provide insights on what to expect and how to counteract these potential challenges.

To navigate this legislative landscape effectively, consider the following 'How-To' guide on political involvement and influence:

Stay Informed:

Be proactive in understanding upcoming legislation that could impact your business. Join your county association and the Maryland State Licensed Beverage Association (MSLBA.org), which actively monitors proposed legislation affecting its members.

Build Relationships:

Attend local liquor board meetings, and familiarize yourself with your local and state representatives. Use resources like the list of local liquor boards for Maryland available at mdalcoholhollaws.org/local-liquor-boards. Identify your State Senator and State Delegate(s) by visiting mdelect.net and entering your or your business' address.

Establish connections with your representatives by introducing yourself, highlighting your business within their district, and ensuring they receive your communications.

Communicate Effectively:

Keep your representatives informed about your business and its positive impact on the community. Ensure that you are included in their communications and distribution lists. Sending a personalized, handwritten letter of introduction with a meeting request can be a powerful way to establish a relationship.

Quantify Your Contributions:

Utilize the resources provided by the American Beverage Licensees (ABL) to quantify your business's contributions to the community. Through the 'members only' area of the ABL website (www.ablusa.org), members can generate reports detailing job numbers, tax contributions, and economic impact at the state legislative district level. This valuable data serves as a persuasive tool when communicating the positive influence your business has in the community.

In the face of potential legislative changes, active engagement with state legislators and thorough preparation are essential to safeguarding your livelihood. By following these steps, you empower yourself to effectively navigate the political landscape and advocate for your business interests. ■

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