



THE VOICE OF MONTGOMERY COUNTY BUSINESS

SB 566 - ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES – DIRECT WINE SHIPPER’S LICENSE

SENATE ECONOMIC, HEALTH AND ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

MARCH 17, 2010

SUPPORT

The Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce ("MCCC"), as the voice of Montgomery County business, **supports SB 566**, which would allow both in and out of state wineries to purchase a shipper’s license to directly ship wine to consumers in Maryland.

Wineries both in and out of Maryland face tremendous barriers to expanding their business in the State. Currently, many of our competitor states including Virginia, West Virginia, and the District of Columbia promote a competitive marketplace for the direct shipment of wine, while Maryland maintains a monopoly in which a few wholesalers control the market. This creates a tremendous disadvantage for Maryland consumers and Maryland businesses.

The Montgomery County Chamber believes that passage of SB 566 will have several positive impacts on the Maryland economy: including increased revenues to the State through licensing fees, excise taxes, and sales taxes on alcohol, increased business for Maryland wineries and retailers, and additional profits for businesses engaged in e-commerce activities. This is a great opportunity for the State to both promote a free marketplace and stimulate economic activity, which is now only taking place in our competitor States.

For these reasons, we request a **favorable report on SB 566**.

9231964_v1

Gigi Godwin, President and CEO
Montgomery County Chamber of Commerce
51 Monroe Street, Suite 1800 Rockville, MD 20850
301-738-0015
www.montgomerycountychamber.com