



**Advisory Commission on Maryland Alcohol
Manufacturing and Promotion Report
December 2023**



Wes Moore, Governor | Aruna Miller, Lt. Governor

Background

Established through Chapters 461 and 462 of the 2022 Maryland General Assembly Session, the Advisory Commission on Maryland Alcohol Manufacturing and Promotion (Commission) was created as a successor to the Advisory Commission on Maryland Wine and Grape Growing. It is staffed by the Maryland Department of Commerce (Commerce).

Reporting

The Commission is required to issue a report each year to the Governor and two legislative committees, per § 5-2111 of the Economic Development Article of the Maryland Code: “The Advisory Commission shall issue a report each year to the Governor and, in accordance with § 2-1257 of the State Government Article, the Senate Education, Health, and Environmental Affairs Committee and the House Economic Matters Committee on the Advisory Commission's findings and recommendations.”

The Fund

The legislation creates a Maryland Alcohol Manufacturing Promotion Fund (the “Fund”), and requires the Department to award certain grants from the Fund for certain purposes. The Fund will award grants to eligible applicants to:

- Foster the creation and expansion of the state’s breweries, distilleries and wineries;
- Attract new visitors to the state’s breweries, wineries and distilleries;
- Encourage and create incentives for special events to promote state wineries, breweries and distilleries;
- Educate the public about alcohol manufacturing in the state, including its rich history;
- Support the expansion of minority ownership and participation in the operation of state breweries, wineries and distilleries; and
- Research and develop incentives for how to promote use of the state’s agricultural products in the production of the state’s beer, wine, and spirits.

Composition

The Commission is composed of the following gubernatorial appointees: two members representing breweries; two members representing growers; two members representing wineries; and two members representing distilleries. Additionally, the Commission will include a member representing the University of Maryland College of Agriculture and Natural Resources; Secretary of the Department of Commerce or designees; Secretary of the Department of Agriculture or designees; Special Secretary of the Governor's Office of Small, Minority and Women Business Affairs or designees; one member from the Alcohol and Tobacco Commission; one member appointed by the President of the Senate; and one House member appointed by the Speaker of the House. The terms are three years with staggered term dates. The Chair is appointed by the Governor.

Members

- Jaime Windon, Lyon Rum/Windon Distilling, Chair
- Mark Burke, Streetcar 82 Brewing
- Robert T. Butz, Owner & Founder, Windridge Farm, LLC
- Joan Cartier, Ph.D., Co-Owner, Links Bridge Vineyard
- Roy W. Crow, Co-Owner, Crow Vineyard & Winery, LLC
- Joseph A. Fiola, Ph.D., Principal Agent & Specialist in Viticulture and Small Fruit, University of Maryland
- Scott Jende, Scientist, Project Manager, Master Distiller, Patapsco Distilling Company
- Kimberly T. Johnson, Co-Owner & Co-Founder, Philosophy Winery
- Jeffrey Kelly, Maryland Alcohol and Tobacco Commission
- The Honorable Kris Valderrama, Delegate
- The Honorable Craig J. Zucker, Senator

ACTIONS:

The Commission advised that there should be an open call for applications to apply for funding for those programs and events that met the overall intention of Chapters 461 and 462 as detailed above. The Commission then came together on May 18, 2023, to make decisions on the 20 applications that were received. There was \$250,000 available for the 2023 round of funding.

The Commission put forth to the Secretary of Commerce, Kevin Anderson, the following recommendations for awards:

Baltimore Museum of Industry: \$20,000 to showcase a gallery space focusing on the relationship between alcohol production/consumption and working-class leisure spotlighting the history of Baltimore breweries and the community. A key component of the exhibit is connecting the past to the present.

Maryland Grape Growers Association: \$54,489 to help identify beneficial yeast that could be used in managing some of the most damaging and emergent grape pathogens such as ripe rot and those involved in sour rot development to increase crop sustainability and profitability.

Maryland Distillers Guild: \$75,000 to produce a signature event to showcase Maryland's rich rye history while telling the story of rye's renaissance. The event is designed to grow into a true signature event for Maryland attracting consumers from the region and the nation.

Brewers Association of Maryland: \$50,511 to partially fund the development of a strong brand identity for the Maryland craft beverage industry. This effort encourages consumers to support local manufacturers by having consumers demand locally made alcoholic beverages to increase transactions to local small businesses.

Maryland Wineries Association: \$50,000 to develop a "wine weekend" as a Maryland Wine Experience, which will encourage local and regional consumers to experience the state's rich wine history as well as sample and taste wine offerings.

At the conclusion of the meeting, the Advisory Commission elected to meet in September 2023 to determine a course of action for the forthcoming dollars anticipated to be received in Fiscal Year 2024.

A meeting was held on September 27, 2023 and the following action items were put forth:

- Recommendation to provide the additional \$174,489 to the previously awarded \$100,511, to fully fund the coordination by the Brewers Association of Maryland to develop a comprehensive branding effort.
- The Commission asked for the Maryland Office of Tourism to provide marketing expertise to produce a "Drink Maryland" campaign for the December gift-giving season to encourage support of the breweries, wineries, and distilleries across the state and create a desire for people to visit the spaces and places where the beverages are manufactured for \$100,000.

A subcommittee meeting was held to review the final funding recommendation to put forth to the Secretary for approval of \$174,489.

The recommendation by the Advisory Committee is that another call for applications be announced in the first quarter of 2024.