

Buddy's

Recently published letters to the editor have been harshly critical of the city's Alcoholic Beverage Control Board and its decision not to renew the 2 a.m. alcoholic beverage license of Buddy's Crabs and Ribs. The citizens of Annapolis should be grateful for the dedicated service of the members of the board and a decision in the matter of Buddy's based on the law.

The regulation of the sale and consumption of alcoholic beverages is governed by state law. Other than Baltimore city, which for many purposes has the status of a county, Annapolis is the only municipal corporation that has been granted the power by state law to regulate alcoholic beverages.

For many years this regulatory authority was exercised by the mayor and aldermen. The potential for the abuse of the authority is obvious and well documented. For example, the 1938 Grand Jury Report deplored the lax standards for granting alcoholic beverage licenses to hotels.

To address this problem, state legislation was enacted in 1982 to authorize the mayor and aldermen to establish an appointed board to exercise the power granted the city to regulate alcoholic beverages. This board was established in 1984.

While reasonable minds can differ over particular decisions, the citizens of Annapolis have been well served by the work of this board and the dedicated service of the long-serving members. Citizens can be confident that decisions of this board are based on the law and the evidence.

As to the matter of buddy's, the state's alcoholic beverage law expressly requires that an alcoholic beverage license be consistent with the applicable zoning. As the zoning provides for a midnight close for Buddy's, the alcoholic beverage license could not provide for a later close.

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