

Candidate Name: **Andrew Friedson**

Office Sought: **Montgomery County Council, District 1**

Candidate Questionnaire from VOCAL MOCO

Background: Voters Opposing County Alcohol Laws in Montgomery County, Maryland (VOCAL MOCO) is a nonprofit advocacy organization established by Montgomery County consumers. Its purpose is to end MOCO's alcohol monopoly and modernize the County's alcohol laws. Our website is located at www.vocalmoco.org

VOCAL MOCO realizes an end to the County's alcohol monopoly and modernization of its alcohol laws will require legislation at the County and State levels that may ultimately require popular referenda.

Accordingly, VOCAL MOCO asks:

1. If elected, would you support legislation to end Montgomery County's wholesale monopoly on the sale of liquor, wine and beer to restaurants and wine and beer to County retailers?
 Yes No
2. If elected, would you support legislation to end the County's retail monopoly on the sale of liquor and permit licensed County retailers to sell liquor?
 Yes No
3. If elected, would you not only support legislation ending the County's monopoly but support ending the County's wholesale and retail alcohol sales altogether?
 Yes No
4. If elected, would you support legislation to permit grocery stores, convenience and other stores, large and small, to sell alcoholic beverages, subject to reasonable licensing requirements, as is allowed in DC and Virginia?
 Yes No
5. If elected, would you support efforts to address any revenue shortfall resulting from an end to the County's monopoly, including requiring the State of Maryland to allot a portion of sales taxes on County alcohol sales to the County?
 Yes No
6. If the monopoly were ended, would you support efforts to help affected County Department of Liquor Control employees transition to good public and private sector jobs?
 Yes No
7. Finally, if elected, would you support legislation that would remove statutory and regulatory impediments to the growth and success of Maryland's craft beer industry, specifically provisions that cap production, sale, and distribution of Maryland craft beer products?
 Yes No

I testified in strong support of the Reform on Tap Act this Session, which would do exactly that. Montgomery County's Prohibition-Era alcohol monopoly is putting the squeeze on Montgomery County consumers and small businesses. Ending it in the most efficient and fiscally responsible way is a defining issue for our campaign. This requires state and local regulatory changes and budgetary offsets, and I am uniquely positioned to finally get it done at the County Council with my background in fiscal and economic policy as a senior advisor for the state's chief alcohol regulator and tax collector, experience reorganizing and restructuring a \$6 billion public agency, and my role supporting small businesses on the Maryland Small Business Development Financing Authority. Government should be defined by how well it serves people, not by how much revenue it generates from people. The question isn't how we afford to cover the amount the monopoly generates at the expense of our residents, but how can we afford to continue losing jobs, quality restaurants, and hundreds of millions in economic activity to neighboring jurisdictions. Together, we can end the monopoly to Ease the Squeeze on our local economy and generate hundreds of millions of dollars in economic activity to support our families, our quality of life, and our shared priorities.