



# AMERICANS *for* TAX REFORM

Grover G. Norquist  
*President*

March 20, 2008

House Ways & Means Committee  
Room 131, House Office Building  
Annapolis, MD 21401

Dear Committee member,

Today you will be asked to consider HB 904, a bill that calls for a \$44 million tax increase on Marylanders. **I write to urge you to stand up for taxpayers in the Free State and stop this bill dead in its tracks.**

In the wake of nearly \$2 billion in tax increases passed less than 6 months ago in special session, Marylanders are still reeling from the pinch of higher taxes. As a result of the actions taken by the legislature, taxpayers cried out in strong opposition and forced reconsideration of the newly-passed 'tech tax'; the repeal of which is still ongoing.

Consequently, your constituents are not open to higher bills in any way, shape or form. Instead, they are depending on you to govern accountably and resist the call for higher taxes- no matter whether or not proponents of HB 904 consider the tax hike "well intentioned."

Imposing a higher tax on alcohol or similar products sends a message to taxpayers that government regulators are more adept than they at making choices of what and how to consume. It is not only a matter of increasing tax burden, it is also a matter of using the threat of higher taxes to reduce personal liberty.

While tax increases in general are lethal to a state's economy by removing taxpayers' hard-earned dollars from the private economy and thus from productive use, alcohol taxes are especially onerous for small businesses. While calling for tax rates on distilled spirits, wine and beer to increase exponentially, the sponsors of this legislation admit that the effect on small businesses will be severe. Sending consumers across borders to purchase alcoholic beverages will cut small businesses, the driver of the state's economy, at the Achilles heel.

Accountable governing means looking out for those who are footing the bill for government- taxpayers. On behalf of taxpayers in Maryland, I urge you to consider the best interests of your constituents and the overall health of the state economy and reject HB 904 and any other tax increase that may be put before you in the current session.

Onward,

Grover Norquist

1920 L Street NW

Suite 200

Washington, DC

20036

T: (202) 785-0266

F: (202) 785-0261

[www.atr.org](http://www.atr.org)