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SUBMITTED TO: General Law Committee
TESTIMONY SUBMITTED BY:
Dan Canova, Store Manager
Cumberland Farms
February 8, 2011

Re: Connecticut Senate Bill 864: AN ACT CONCERNING GROCERY STORE BEER PERMITS

Good afternoon, members of the Committee, and thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today. My name is Dan Canova and I am the Store Manager for Cumberland Farms, Inc., in Deep River, Connecticut. I am also a resident of Connecticut. In fact, behind me are many members of our local staff who live in Connecticut

Cumberland Farms presently operates 64 convenience stores in Connecticut, employs over 600 employees, and serves thousands of customers each day. Our stores and employees help fuel Connecticut's economic engine. In today's challenging economy, Cumberland Farms has continued operating all stores in your state despite the economic downturn.

We at Cumberland Farms support S.B. 864, which would allow convenience stores like ours to sell beer. The bill would treat consumers fairly and our convenience store business would be treated similar to other small store format businesses if you pass this bill. The key reasons for our support include:

- **Currently, many convenience stores are denied a permit to sell beer in Connecticut because they simply do not qualify under the current law even though they sell many food and grocery items. This is because current law requires that a store primarily sell food items and, if convenience stores like ours sell gasoline, that directly affects the eligibility of a store to qualify. The law is antiquated and was adopted at a time when convenience stores did not sell gasoline. The law does not reflect today's consumers' choices and the current state of the convenience store market.**
- **It is inconvenient for consumers not to be able to buy beer in a local convenience store and passage of S.B. 864 would increase beer sales and other product sales in convenience stores, which would result in much greater state revenues in this difficult economic time. We estimate our incremental beer sales to be about \$15,750 per store per month. This revenue as well as the sales of other products that accompany beer sales would be subject to state taxes.**
- **The current reality is that Connecticut has the second lowest beer consumption rate in the country and the lowest in all of New England, according to the Beer Institute. The state is already losing revenue by not allowing convenience stores to sell beer.**

- Convenience stores like Cumberland Farms already sell products that require age verification. Convenience stores are well equipped to sell beer, and, in fact, a majority of the New England states and New York allow convenience stores to sell beer already, and we operate stores in those states.

In conclusion, Cumberland Farms is a proud member of the Connecticut business community today and would like to continue to invest in the state. If enacted into law, S.B. 864 will make it more attractive to do business in Connecticut.

Thank you for giving me this opportunity to present testimony before the Committee on an issue of critical importance to Cumberland Farms.