

Wholesale Petroleum

February 8, 2011

Co-Chair Paul R. Doyle
Co-Chair Joseph J. Taborsak
Senator Kevin D. Witkos
Representative Rosa C. Rebimbas

Members of the General Law Committee:

I submit this testimony in support of S.B. 864, An Act Concerning Grocery Store Beer Permits.

This legislation attempts to correct a gross inequity in the market place. Big box retailers and chain grocery stores are selling gasoline and beer, but small family owned c-stores are unable to do the same. It makes little sense to allow, for example Stop & Shop who owned by Royal Ahold based in the Netherlands, to sell gasoline and beer, but not Connecticut based c-stores.

A short time ago Stop & Shop/Royal Ahold closed their distribution center in North Haven leaving 850 people without jobs. How can we have a state law that permits Stop & Shop to have an advantage over local c-stores, who are staples in their respective communities?

I believe that S.B. 864 is an opportunity to right a wrong that impacts local businesses who live, own businesses and raise their families in our state. Passing S.B. 864 takes nothing away from Stop & Shop, but it does allow c-stores to compete fairly with them.

C-stores are also faced with competition from package stores who sell cigarettes, lottery tickets, ice and newspapers. These products are core to the c-store industry, yet package stores are allowed under the law to sell them. S.B. 864 allows c-stores to have one product (beer) that package stores sell - while package stores are allowed to sell several items that c-stores sell.

C-stores have been victim to package stores and chain grocery stores selling their core products and all we ask for is fair and equal treatment.

I ask that the General Law Committee to **support S.B. 864**, An Act Concerning Grocery Store Beer Permits.

Sincerely,

Brent Coscia
Wholesale Petroleum