



CONNECTICUT POLICE CHIEFS ASSOCIATION

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To: Members of the General Assembly

The Connecticut Police Chiefs Association (CPCA) represents every municipal police department in Connecticut as well as police departments at private and state universities. Among our other duties, these police departments enforce liquor laws and investigate crimes associated with alcohol abuse.

We are told that some legislators may propose to allow Sunday sales of alcohol at an estimated 3,000 grocery and package stores. Any law which increases availability of alcohol beverages at off-premise stores (grocery and package stores) on Sunday will have a negative impact upon municipal and university police departments. We therefore oppose this expansion.

Retail liquor outlets need police attention to prevent after-hours sales and sales to prohibited persons (e.g., minors or drunks), as well as the usual retail crimes of robbery, shoplifting, and fraud. It will cost police agencies additional, unbudgeted funds to allot extra officers to patrol these sales locations on an additional business day (Sunday).

We also believe that Sunday sales would increase alcohol abuse by minors. It's a "no-school" day, so underage consumers would have all day to attempt illicit liquor purchases. More teens, subject to peer pressure, would be working in grocery stores which sell beer.

Moreover, it is our experience that substance abuse—especially alcohol—is a significant factor in many domestic-violence calls our police departments answer each year, so we are loath to add availability.

We are dismayed that the impetus for Sunday sales is the assumption that tax revenue will increase. This increase will occur only if consumers buy and drink more liquor because stores are open one more day.

First, we think that more drinking is detrimental to public safety. We urge the legislature not to adopt a bad public policy in the hope of a marginal revenue increase.

Second, we think that such hope is illusory. Sunday sales won't pull business from Massachusetts, where lower taxes and fewer permits-per-capita give Bay State outlets a competitive edge. Sunday sales will merely spread six days' business over seven days.

Thank you for your consideration of our opposition to Sunday sales at off-premise beverage locations.

Sincerely,

Chief Anthony Salvatore
Chief James Strillacci
Co-Chairs, CPCA Legislative Committee