



February 28, 2012

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

General Law Committee:

We are submitting testimony in **support of H.B. 5021**, AN ACT CONCERNING COMPETITIVE ALCOHOLIC LIQUOR PRICING AND HOURS OF OPERATION FOR PERMITTEES.

The Independent Connecticut Petroleum Association (ICPA) represents 576 marketers and their associated business in Connecticut. ICPA members employ over 13,000 people in our state. Our members own, operate or distribute product to more than 1,000 convenience stores (c-stores) in our state.

Section 7 of H.B. 5021 would allow c-stores to obtain a permit to sell beer. If passed, this section would increase competition among sellers of beer, provide more choices for consumers and allow c-stores to compete with stores located in Massachusetts and New York.

ICPA believes that H.B. 5021 should pass for the following reasons:

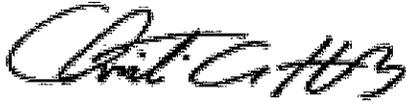
- **Consumer Choice** – Under the current law the government chooses the winners and losers by dictating who can and who cannot sell beer. Consumers should choose who they want to do business with and buy products from. H.B. 5021 allows for equal competition and provides consumers with choices.
- **Greater Competition** – Today the law restricts where beer can be sold. H.B. 5021 would add potential competitors to the marketplace who will fight to keep and gain new customers. When businesses compete – consumers win;
- **Increased Revenue to the State** – Last year, the Office of Fiscal Analysis (OFA) reported that S.B. 864 (which is similar to section 7 of H.B. 5021) would “result in a gain from the alcoholic beverage and sales taxes of \$1.7 million annually”. This means that the state can increase revenue without raising taxes.

- **Loss of Tax Revenue** - Most of New England and New York allow the sale of beer at convenience stores. Connecticut is at a competitive disadvantage because of this antiquated Blue law and suffers state and local tax losses because of it.

ICPA asks that the General Law Committee to **support H.B. 5021**, AN ACT CONCERNING COMPETITIVE ALCOHOLIC LIQUOR PRICING AND HOURS OF OPERATION FOR PERMITTEES, and allow for greater competition among beer retailers within our state, enhanced consumer choice, the ability to compete c-stores in Massachusetts and New York who sell beer.

This legislation helps businesses, consumers and the state.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Christ. Herb", written in a cursive style.

Christian A. Herb
Vice President