

Oppose
#5021

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Thank you for allowing me to address you today.

In September of 2009, I was laid off after a 28-year corporate career with three major corporations in the financial sector. Despite a lot of effort, I spent the next 18 months unemployed. During that time, I decided that I did not want anyone else controlling my destiny again so I looked to match my business experience with my love of wine. I took my all of my savings and bought a package store in June of 2011. With the proposed bill as it currently stands, it would appear I have pretty bad timing! Before I even really get started, my dream could be over.

I am not averse to change. Much of my career was spent helping others in business make effective changes to improve business processes, reduce expenses and increase revenue. What I learned is that all successful and sustainable change is methodical and contains well explored and tested solutions that create a "win-win" for all parties involved. As I read this bill, it is very one sided. It creates a big win for the mega stores and will really crush the small business owners like myself. We are supposed to be the heart of any recovery. In the worst economy since the Great Depression, why would anyone pick this time to decimate an industry?

There are a few things that I believe need greater review before you seriously consider this bill as it stands:

- Is the \$8MM in new revenue expected by Sunday sales a real number? My customers in Fairfield, who buy on Saturday for Sunday as well, will likely now just split their sales so I would not expect any increased revenue but I will have increased expenses. I understand Sunday sales as a convenience to consumers but not bundled with the rest of the bill.
- As the super stores build up, small businesses will be put out of business. Licenses will then revert to the State. There will be no “windfall” for a small business owner who tries to sell his/her medallion. You will not increase overall sales in the state but, rather, just concentrate those sales into few locations. And that DECREASES competition and CONVENIENCE.
- Is the failure of 1000 stores worth it? You will not only lose my 5 employees paying taxes and spending in their communities, but they will also likely go on unemployment and task State resources. There could be 7000 retail job losses at across the State. But make no mistake; wholesalers will cut sales staff too. And there will be fewer trucks on the road to deliver to fewer stores.
- We are tasked with managing a controlled substance and go to great lengths to prevent sales to minors. Can you expect the same diligence from a 17 year old grocery clerk or gas station attendant especially when their friends come in?

I ask you to consider the downstream impacts of a poorly thought-out bill BEFORE you try to implement it. A lot of needless harm stands to come too many people who live, work, pay taxes and support their communities.

Thank you.