

The Connecticut Small Brand Council Inc.



To preserve, encourage and expand a vast wine, beer and spirits product selection for Connecticut consumers in the marketplace while also growing jobs.

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The Connecticut Small Brand Council (CSBC) is an association that fosters a stronger relationship within the existing three tiered system and the consumer and smaller brand products. CSBC's membership includes small manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers of alcohol that want to expand the already vast selection of wine, beer and spirit products in Connecticut while also increasing the jobs that these small businesses provide to the framework of the Connecticut economy. The CSBC is an advocate for those companies that create the product, ship it and the consumer that buys it.

We cannot support, as written, **H.B. No. 5429 (RAISED) AN ACT ESTABLISHING A CRAFT DISTILLER PERMIT**. We support the idea of a consumer able to purchase a small amount of product from these facilities but we do not support that bottles can be purchased without adhering to the current minimum bottle pricing rules of retail sales. Package stores and small manufacturers are natural allies in the business and it makes no sense to try to circumvent this relationship as the large network of package stores in CT is a great sales force for these products. Minimum pricing laws exist to provide the consumer with a varied selection of product offerings in CT at competitive prices. It also encourages package stores to take a chance on new product offerings in their stores. Without the law, stores may not sell some of these great CT products.

We would also suggest revising the current manufacturer permit instead of creating a new license for craft distillers. What is a company to do when it reaches the threshold of gallonage sales? They would have to terminate the craft permit in order to apply for a manufacturer permit and this could seriously disrupt business operations because it could take a while for the new permit to be processed.

Some additional thoughts: there shouldn't be a minimum threshold of gallonage and the maximum threshold should be somewhere between 50,000 and 100,000 gallons per year. The bill limits distilling to being on premise, but many in CT distill in other locations within the state and sell it from their facilities. The tastings law from 2013 for manufacturers is not the same as the one suggested in this bill. Many CT companies distill several different products and the ounce limit should pertain to each product or SKU.

We also oppose **SB AN ACT CONCERNING THE EXTENSION OF CREDIT TO ALCOHOLIC LIQUOR RETAILERS FROM MANUFACTURERS AND WHOLESALERS**. Current credit law works and gives retailers flexibility with payments. Repealing this section would negatively affect the varied product selection in the market as stores would order fewer products because most sales would be COD and that invariably would hurt retailers and consumers.

Thank you for considering our concerns.

The Connecticut Small Brand Council (CSBC),

President, Adam von Gootkin, Onyx Spirits Company, East Hartford, CT,

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