



WINE AND SPIRITS WHOLESALERS OF CONNECTICUT, INC.

Peter A. Berdon
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TESTIMONY OF WINE AND SPIRITS WHOLESALERS OF CONNECTICUT

RE: Proposed SB Bill 875 An Act Establishing A Cheese Wine Shop.

The WSWC appreciates the opportunity to provide this testimony to the General Law Committee relative to Proposed Senate Bill 875.

The members of the Wine and Spirits Wholesalers of Connecticut sell and ship to licensed retailers including all of the more than 1200 package stores. These package stores offer more than 25,000 different wine products for sale to Connecticut consumers. The members of the WSWC fail to see the benefit to Connecticut consumers of yet another license in addition to the 36 available liquor license types permitted under current law. This is particularly true given that a cheese shop that desires to sell wine may currently do so – all they have to do is apply for a package store license.

Who is the WSWC? The Wine & Spirits Wholesalers of Connecticut, Inc. was established in 1964 and since that date has been the trade association representing wine and spirits wholesalers in Connecticut. The WSWC membership totals 53 and its members distribute the vast majority of wines and spirits sold in the state of Connecticut. The members of the WSWC span a diversity of size from very large to very small, but all are family owned businesses. Individually, they employ as many as 230 employees and as few as a one person working part-time. Collectively, they are a significant and integral part of Connecticut's economy. The members of the WSWC:

- contribute in excess of \$200 million dollars in direct and in-direct benefits to the state's economy;
- provide in excess of 1,700 direct jobs to Connecticut residents;
- Pay in excess of \$167 million dollars in wages;
- pay in excess of \$60.2 million dollars in state excise taxes;¹
- promote, market, sell, warehouse and deliver nearly 36,000 different brands; and
- assist the Department of Revenue Services in the collection of Sales and Use Taxes in excess of \$141 Million Dollars annually².

¹ FYE June 30, 2014.

² \$141 million is the total sales and use taxes estimated to be collected on the retail sale of wine, spirits and beer in 2010. Spencer Kane, Cain Associates, LLC, Economic Impact, March 2012. Each year the Department of Revenue Services requests that wholesalers furnish sales made to retailers to determine if individual retailers are fully accounting for all sales.

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The members of the WSWC are committed to ensuring that the best possible safeguards to prevent the sale of beverage alcohol to minors are in place and adults of legal drinking age consume beverage alcohol responsibly, while at the same time providing an efficient method of distribution which provides access to a wide variety of quality wine and spirits from all over the world.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Peter A. Berdon', enclosed within a large, loopy, circular scribble.

Peter A. Berdon,
Executive Director/General Counsel