

**db Distilling, LLC**

**Testimony before the General Law Committee, March 5, 2015**

**Raised Bill 977 An act Concerning Craft Manufacturers of Alcoholic Liquor**

Good Afternoon Members of the General Law Committee, My name is John Taylor and I am here as an owner of startup company in Bloomfield, CT. On behalf of my partners and employees, I would like to express my thanks to you for raising Bill 977 (An act Concerning Craft Manufacturing of Alcoholic Liquor) My company, db Distilling (marketed under the name Waypoint Spirits) is a startup that has just received our federal distilled spirits permit and are anxiously awaiting approval from the State of Connecticut Liquor Control Commission for our CT manufacturing permit. We plan on producing Vodka, Gin, Whiskey, and Rum here in Connecticut. Our request is to allow for nominal bottle sales and tastings to consumers who are attending tours at Connecticut distilleries.

I am a big proponent of the buy local movement and appreciate the health and economic benefits of eating and drinking local. Over the years I have visited many farms, breweries, wineries, and distilleries in Connecticut and our neighboring states and have developed a deeper appreciation for the products made by the small business owners who operate these establishments and how connected they are to their communities. My company is actively working with local farmers who are growing the grains and botanicals we are planning on using as ingredients to produce our spirits we are excited to join the ranks of Connecticut's local producers. I am hopeful that my company will prosper and I will be able to create more, much needed, manufacturing jobs.

The craft distilling industry in Connecticut is relatively new but growing rapidly and we look to the recent successes in the craft beer and wine industries as guidance for how we can grow and be successful while providing an enjoyable experience for our customers. Connecticut Craft breweries and wineries as well

as distilleries in most states in the country allow for onsite sales and tastings. I believe that Connecticut's current laws place us at a competitive disadvantage.

I envision my distillery to be part of a day trip destination where people come into our town, visit the distillery, visit my neighboring craft breweries (Thomas Hooker and Back East Brewing), have dinner at a local restaurant (RePublic or Saki Café) and see a movie at our local theater. Allowing onsite sales and samples will not only provide an important revenue stream but will also help us to gain visibility and create a larger demand for locally crafted spirits.

I support the suggested amendments to the manufacturer of alcoholic liquor permit, Section 1. Subsection (a) of 30-16. These changes will allow manufactures of alcohol to sell small retail amounts of our products without creating a new permit and will allow craft distillers in CT an opportunity to prosper.

Thank you again for your time.