

Testimony of
Brescome Barton, Inc.
On
Senate Bill 14
"An Act Ensuring the Regional Competitiveness of
Connecticut's Liquor Prices"

February 23, 2016

Mr. Chairmen. Members of the General Law Committee. Brescome Barton would like to comment on Senate Bill 14, "An Act Ensuring the Regional Competitiveness of Connecticut's Liquor Prices." Through this proposal, Governor Malloy is seeking a revision in his FY17 budget adding \$2.1 million in revenue as a result of eliminating minimum bottle pricing for alcoholic liquor in our state.

We **oppose this change** in our law. This General Assembly has taken many steps in 2012 and 2015 to modernize our liquor laws. Permittees in Connecticut may now have an interest in four package stores, moving to five stores as of July 1, 2016. Additionally, the legislature has authorized Sunday sales and moved sale hours to 10 a.m. to 6 p.m. on Sundays and to 8 a.m. to 10 p.m. on weekdays. While convenient to the public, these changes have placed enormous pressure on many of the small "mom and pop" package stores that need to contend with the consequences of more days and longer hours. These small businesses, many of which have been purchased with an individual's life savings, are still trying to adjust to these changes during difficult economic times. Eliminating minimum bottle will place these businesses at great risk. Many would go out of business.

Lastly, we believe the anticipated revenues from this proposal would pale in contrast to loss of jobs, diminished rental incomes, lower local property taxes and contribute to the State's escalating unemployment compensation costs.

Brescome Barton, Inc., a wine and spirit wholesaler, with offices and a warehouse in North Haven, CT has over 400 employees servicing the state of Connecticut.