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**State of Connecticut**

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES  
STATE CAPITOL**

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FINANCE, REVENUE AND BONDING COMMITTEE  
PUBLIC SAFETY AND SECURITY COMMITTEE

Testimony in Opposition of SB 14

**An Act Ensuring The Regional Competitiveness Of Connecticut's Liquor Prices.**

General Law Committee

February 23, 2016

Chairmen Leone and Baram, Ranking Members Witkos and Carter, and members of the General Law Committee. I would like to thank the Committee for the opportunity to testify in opposition to **SB 14 An Act Ensuring The Regional Competitiveness Of Connecticut's Liquor Prices.**

Over the past 35 years Connecticut has had minimum pricing laws in the alcohol retail business, many are owned and operated by families or mom and pop stores. They are part of our communities and give generously back by contributing financially to our local civic groups. I believe the current minimum pricing laws prevent the larger stores from selling bottles below cost attracting consumers with the goal of driving the mom and pop stores out of business.

In time, raising their prices due to less competition in our towns when the smaller establishments cannot stay in business. We have approximately 1200 retail package stores in our state. You have to ask yourself, how many of these stores are asking for changing the minimum bottle pricing? I'd say very few, with the exception of one mega store in the Stamford area. Evidence shows us that many of our local stores and neighbors could go out of business causing greater job loss and a greater need for social services. If the sole reason for this proposal is lower prices, then Connecticut should eliminate the sales tax on alcohol as Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire have done so.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Dave Yaccarino