



GENERAL LAW COMMITTEE
PUBLIC HEARING - MARCH 6, 2018

Dear Co-Chairs Sen. Leone, Sen. Witkos, Rep. D'Agostino, and Ranking Member Rep. Smith.

I am grateful for the opportunity to submit testimony in support of H.B. 5036 - *"An Act Promoting Craft Breweries and Distilleries and Price Fairness."* My name is Bob Chicoine and I am the co-owner of a new brewery that is looking to open up in Milford, Connecticut. Dockside Waterfront Biergarten and Brewery will create more than 10 jobs while helping to revitalize the waterfront near the Milford and Stratford border.

This proposed legislation is favorable for the craft beer industry statewide. The current law limits sales to only nine liters per consumer, in a given day. This limitation appears arbitrary, and impedes the brewery owners ability to operate at their highest capabilities and limits their beneficial economic impact to our state. This bill would work to remove the sales limit and would result in increased sales for the breweries, which, in turn, results in increased tax revenue for Connecticut.

The craft brewery industry in Connecticut is creating jobs, revitalizing run-down properties, and bringing much-needed revenue to cities and towns across the state.

The current economic impact of the craft beer industry in Connecticut is more than \$700 million annually produced by nearly 50 breweries in operation, according to the Brewer's Association in 2016. And, that number is more than likely far lower than the impact today, considering there are now approximately 65 operating breweries in the state with almost 50 in the planning stages.

The craft beer industry in Connecticut is also helping to revitalize previously run-down properties in industrial or overlooked areas. The success of craft brewpubs in the Nutmeg State is about more than beer; it's also about serving as a gathering place, a source of local identity and pride, and as a means for turning rundown industrial properties into engines for economic growth and job creation.

In addition, craft breweries have contributed significantly to revenue generation for cities and towns in Connecticut and across the country. In fact, nationwide, craft breweries generated nearly \$50 million in

business and personal tax in 2016, and nearly \$10 million the same year, according to a recent Beer Institute Study.

Now more than ever, as the craft beer industry continues to serve as a bright spot in the state's economy, we need to incentivize these local job-creating businesses to grow and thrive.

For an industry that has been around for nearly 200 years, to sextuple the number of establishments and triple its workforce in less than a decade, speaks volumes to the prosperous craft beer movement.

Today, the craft beer industry in our state is unnecessarily crimped by restrictions. Let's fix it: Level the playing field and allow the craft beer industry to continue to flourish in Connecticut by allowing them to increase their distribution volume.

Thank you for your consideration,

Bob Chicoine
Dockside Waterfront Biergarten and Brewery