

Dear Representative D'Agostino, Senator Leone, Senator Witkos, Representative Smith, and distinguished members of the General Law Committee,

My name is Christina Needham. I am submitting written testimony in support of H.B. 5036 – An Act Promoting Craft Breweries and Distilleries and Price Fairness. As a resident of the State of Connecticut I want to thank you for the opportunity to voice my support of House Bill 5036.

I want to start by explaining I'm not only a resident of CT but also a huge supporter of CT Beer! The past five years have really seen a massive uptick in availability and quality for in-state beer manufacturers. Watching the industry grow at such a speed has been truly amazing, and with that growth has come growth in skilled labor, charitable giving and community-building activities. I often choose to visit the tasting rooms of independent breweries as this is the cheapest, freshest and most informative way for me to buy beer. I know that the money I spend in a local tasting room isn't going to a massive overseas corporation and the beer I receive is of top quality and freshness. My support for HB 5036 mainly stems from my support of the CT beer industry. Until recently, I was unaware that it is in fact a law that breweries can only sell me nine liters of beer in a day. Obviously, it isn't every visit that I brush up against this law, but I've found that when I want to host an evening or share beer with out-of-town friends, I either need to bring a friend to the brewery for a purchase or I am forced to visit a package store. In my experience, I've found package stores to have a limited selection of CT-made beer, most of their inventory is on the older side, they often charge upwards of five dollars more for something that could be found at a brewery, or they repackage the beer that I want with beer that I don't want, forcing me into the sale. This leads me to my point. I find it ridiculous that the state maintains such a law restricting the potential sales and subsequent growth of our flourishing brewing industry. This is akin to me visiting a farmer's market where the state says I'm only allowed to buy ten eggs from the farmer, but if I visit the grocery store down the road, I'm allowed to buy the full dozen. This seems backwards. In a state desperate to create jobs, it seems like stifling a manufacturing industry with proven growth is the wrong way to go. I urge you to pass HB 5036, and show your support for our in-state manufacturers of beer!

Thank You,
Christina Needham

Sent from my iPhone