

Dear Chairpersons,

We are here today as the two owners of Black Pond Brews- one of the smallest breweries, in one of the most rural areas of the state. We are here to support Bill 5039 in favor of removing the 9 Liter limit. As evidenced by the qualifications I just mentioned, we are a great case study for the economic impacts that this bill will have on our state. In a lot of ways our brewery highlights how the craft beer movement in Connecticut has and will evolve over the coming years. Breweries were and are traditionally opened on a massive scale with the help of immense loans and heavy personal investment, privileges we were never afforded in our quest to start a brewery. We intentionally started small and have used all profits to grow our business organically and steadily since 2012. As the market becomes more competitive we believe that more and more breweries will mimic our model and rely heavily on this legislation being passed. We are at the point now where we need to expand our production along with our distribution, and the passage of this bill would help us and other breweries take that next step. Removing this limit will lead to a direct increase in sales, which we would continue to put back into the expansion of our business. This would afford us to have an increase in production, which in turns brings in money to the state in the form of both excise and sales tax. Furthermore, being in Windham county we have a large percentage of customers arriving from Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and beyond. These customers routinely wish to purchase large quantities of our product but are unaware of our draconian laws, which puts our entire state at a severe and unnecessary economic disadvantage. We have and will hear from several groups that this bill could harm not only distributors but also package stores located throughout the state. Such an argument is short sighted and frankly misinformed. As one of the smallest breweries in the state, we are not big enough to sign on with a distributor. Yet if we were afforded to increase our production as previously mentioned, we will inevitably sign on with a distributor to help us expand our geographic and economic impact on the state and beyond- thus increasing their revenues. More brands and greater variety of products will in turn help some of the smaller package stores and distributors maintain diversity of their products and therefore at least maintain if not even increase sales. Therefore, the 9 liter limit has not only stymied the growth of locally owned businesses in Connecticut, but even the industry of the groups who stand here against it. Thank you for your time.

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