Bill No.: HB-7183
Title: AN ACT CONCERNING ALCOHOLIC LIQUOR WHOLESALER PERMITS.
Vote Date: 3/25/2019
Vote Action: Joint Favorable Substitute
PH Date: 2/28/2019
File No.: 

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SPONSORS OF BILL:
General Law Committee

REASONS FOR BILL:
This bill will modernize the Liquor Control Act regarding alcoholic liquor wholesaler permits. The current law regarding wholesalers was put into effect after prohibition and has become too restrictive in today’s marketplace. The bill extends from 6 months to 18 months the statutory protection against manufacturing or out-of-state shipper permittee terminating or diminishing its geographic territory, as well other changes to the existing law regarding wholesale permits.

RESPONSE FROM ADMINISTRATION/AGENCY:
None Expressed

NATURE AND SOURCES OF SUPPORT:
Kraszewski, John, Captain and Founder, Armada Brewing
As an advocate for the growth of Connecticut breweries and believe that HB7183 and HB 7184 address many issues with the current liquor law. There should be removal of the limits for beer to go from the breweries. In 2012, when the 8 liter to 9 liter limit became law no one could have foreseen the increase in the number of breweries in the state. In 2017, Connecticut breweries contributed over $745 million dollars and have created to date over 4,600 jobs to our economy. The 3 tier system was drafted post prohibition and designed to protect retailers from abusive and unfair practices of big beer companies. Craft breweries if they sign on with a wholesaler under current law are locked in for life whether they want to sell their beer or not.

Miller, Rob, Partner, Epicure Brewing
As the craft breweries grow in Connecticut, both legislature and the industry need to work together to modernize the way it does business. There are no other industries that are restricted the way breweries sales currently are.

**Simoncini, Aaren, owner, The Beer’d Brewing Company**
By allowing breweries to sell more than 9 liters direct to consumers will not destroy the 3 tier system. The system was put in place 86 years ago. I place out success squarely on our ability to sell direct to the consumer.

**Hemenway, William, Seymour, CT**
Changes to our beer laws are significantly overdue. The limits we can purchase are significantly impacting the customers decision to visit Connecticut breweries when our bordering states have no limits on what can be purchased.

**Labendz, Barry, Founder, Kent Falls Brewing Company**
I continue to support the need to increase the amount of beer allowed to be sold as direct to consumer at our breweries.

**Pappas, Phil, Executive Director, CT Brewers Guild**
We continue to advocate for an increase for off-premises consumption sales and modernizing the Connecticut liquor laws.

**Devino, Mike, Mercury Fuel**
We support HB7183 with added language to expand beer sales to convenience stores where gasoline is sold for a variety of reasons.

**Herb, Christian, President, CEMA**
We ask that this bill be amended to include convenience stores where gasoline is sold be allowed to sell beer.

**Curry, Kevin F., Danby Gasoline Marketers, Inc.**
We are trying to survive a very competitive market and are looking for help. We would like HB7183 to be amended to allow convenience stores that sell gasoline be allowed to sell beer.

**Cangelosi, Sal, Atlantis Management**
HB 7183 should be amended to allow convenience stores that sell gasoline be allowed to sell beer. We just want fair and equal treatment.

**NATURE AND SOURCES OF OPPOSITION:**

**Abate, Salvatore, Secretary-Treasurer/Principal Officer for Teamster Local 443**
HB7183 is clearly an attack on the three-tier system of alcohol regulation. The three-tier program has promoted responsible lawful trade practices. This bill would open up the market to predatory practices of large, out-of-state corporations. Inevitably, this bill will lead to the closing of small mom and pop stores.

**Lavigne, Brian, Teamster local 443, member**
This bill would impact jobs and drive many liquor stores out of business. This system has worked for 80 years, if it’s not broken, why fix it.
Cafero, Jr., Lawrence F., Executive Director, General Counsel
This bill would eliminate the “just cause” provision that has been in the law for decades. This “just cause” provision is considered “franchise protection”. I am speaking only regarding wine and spirits. This bill will contribute to the closing of family owned businesses. The current franchise laws in Connecticut have served our state well for decades, please vote no on HB7183

Monteleone, Patrick, owner, Harry’s Wine and Liquor Market
HB7183 is designed to break the backs of small businesses in Connecticut and drive out the mom and pop stores. If this bill is passed it will be devastating on many levels.

Dolan, Michael, CBWA
CBWA works everyday with Connecticut’s craft brew industry both in delivery and marketing. Our ultimate goal is to work with others in the industry to be sure the three-tier system thrives. Distributors’ work to be sure that the citizens of our state have good quality and are safe.

Fyfe, Vincent, President-United Food-Commercial Workers International
Brescome, Barton, Inc.
HB7183 will upend an industry, rooted by the 21st amendment of the US Constitution. The proposed amendment will result in the abandonment of its responsibilities to regulate and control distribution, eliminate competition and promote market domination.

Singh, Sunpreet
This bill will cause many to lose their jobs and it is an affront to small businesses the state.

Reported by:  Bonnie Gray, Asst. Clerk          Date: 04/01/2019