



**RETAIL
ASSOCIATION OF
MAINE**
Voice of Maine Retail

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June 30, 2017

Orland G. McPherson, Chair
State Liquor and Lottery Commission
8 State House Station
Augusta, Maine 04333-0008
Via Email: Tammy.L.Miller@maine.gov

RE: Comments Regarding the De-Listing of All 50 ML Sized Spirits

Dear Chairman McPherson and Commission Members,

Thank you for the opportunity to share our thoughts on the recommendation to de-list all 50 milliliter sized spirits currently listed by the Liquor and Lottery Commission. On behalf of the members of the Retail Association of Maine, we are opposed to de-listing.

The Retail Association of Maine has more than 350 members statewide and represents retailers of all sizes. Maine's retailers employ more than 85,000 Mainers.

While the commission did a very good job making the case for selling spirits in a socially responsible manner to help address drinking and driving, the reality is all spirits products contribute to that problem, not just 50 ml bottles. Eliminating these products will likely drive consumers to larger 100 ml bottles instead.

While we had concerns with LD 56 and opposed its passage, the legislature enacted the bill and it will become the law of the land. Given that, we feel that the law should be given time to work to see if it reduces the litter problem of 50 ml bottles. There will be some issues with the 5 cent deposit, but our retail members stand ready to work with the commission and other parties to help implement the law. If, down the road, the litter issue continues to be a problem, than we can look at other alternatives to help address that problem.


Eliminating 50 ml bottles is not going to address drinking and driving. In fact, it may make the problem worse as those individuals that choose to drink and drive, will now choose a larger bottle of spirits to consume.

For many years, Maine retailers have been severely hampered with liquor sales when popular brands were sold for far less in neighboring New Hampshire. It is a credit to the Bureau that they have undertaken an aggressive marketing campaign letting people know that spirits are available at the same, or in some cases lower, prices as in New Hampshire. And those prices are consistent throughout the State of Maine. This has increased retail sales and has been a benefit

to both the State and retailers. It would be unfortunate to turn that around and essentially punish Maine retailers by losing the sales of 50 milliliter bottles. We believe an approach such as a campaign on the perils of drinking and driving is a more reasoned approach.

Thank you for your consideration of these comments.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Curtis F. Picard".

Curtis Picard, CAE
President & CEO