



**Holiday Hours:** According to Section 30-91 (d) of the Liquor Control Act, the sale of alcoholic liquor by package stores is unlawful on Thanksgiving Day, New Year's Day, and Christmas. Package stores must operate under normal Sunday hours (10 a.m.– 6 p.m.) on both Christmas Eve and New Year's Eve. Have a safe and happy holiday season!

# The Grapevine

Newsletter of the Connecticut Package Stores Association

Fall 2017

## 1500 FOOD STORES SELLING WINE: IDEA PUSHED IN SPECIAL SESSION

In the final days of the special session, a number of issues were proposed by various leaders from each of the four caucuses. On one night in particular, there were as many as twenty items proposed by various leaders and staff in some cases. These issues included several which were passed in the broadly compromised final budget.

One item that was pushed by a caucus was to allow the sale of wine in all food stores. This would have opened the door to 1,500 new sellers of wine in the state.

Passage of this item by the General Assembly would be a disaster for retail package stores, wholesalers, quality wine producers, and the public. This controversial concept did not get included in the final budget bill.

## CPSA UPDATES & EVENTS

The Connecticut Package Stores Association is planning a number of activities over the next several months, including membership events, some of which will focus on plans for the upcoming legislative session.

CPSA will again visit with an industry partner, which will be a great opportunity for



[www.thebeveragejournal.com](http://www.thebeveragejournal.com)

current and prospective members to learn more about the association, as well as current industry and legislative news. The next event will take place **January 15, 2018 at Onyx Spirits Company in East Hartford, CT**. Additional CT distillers will be in attendance, as well as members of the CT Small Brands Council (CSBC). CSBC's membership includes small distributors, as well as others who frequently work with CPSA members. CPSA encourages all package store industry members and local legislators to join these meetings.

We have been fortunate to have local representatives attend our past events to talk about the jobs and stability that industry members bring to their communities.. The January meeting will be particularly important, as the (*cont'd on page 6*)

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## CT'S BOTTLE BILL: WHO WINS, WHO LOSES?

There was much discussion at the legislature in the past year regarding the "bottle bill," including its expansion to all beverage containers and the possibility of eliminating it entirely.

During the special session, the Governor continued to urge its expansion to iced teas, sports drinks, and similar containers. There was no suggestion from the Governor or other parties to expand the bill to wine and spirits bottles, despite its proposal in the regular session.

It was also recommended that the expansion should still include deposit fees, but that the collected fees be returned to the state, instead of consumers.

CPSA has attempted to remain neutral on the issue, as package stores have customers and legislators who support or oppose the repeal of the bottle bill. There is a very strong group of legislators who oppose any repeal of the bottle bill and appreciate the efforts of retail stores to make the current legislation work over the years.

As with any issue, there are clear winners and losers under either scenario. Package stores do not have much to gain or lose if the bottle bill is repealed. Redemption centers have typically attached themselves to grocery stores where employees have mostly been replaced by bottle redemption machines. The major winner under a bottle bill repeal will be wholesale beverage suppliers for a number of reasons.

Major losers under a repeal will include private and public municipal waste collection services who will have to deal with the major increase in containers to the existing recycling programs without any compensation. Enforcement of recycling and all refuse will place fines, constraints, and costs onto every entity that generates waste, which includes every business and homeowners.



## CT BUDGET PASSES WITH INDUSTRY BENEFITS

CPSA is pleased to inform our membership that the CT General Assembly special session ended without any damage to the package store industry. Governor Malloy was unsuccessful in all three of his attempts to eliminate minimum bottle pricing during the period of February to October. Representatives of a couple of retailers also worked unsuccessfully to eliminate the "min-bottle" provision. The push to eliminate minimum bottle during a budget crisis was ironic as it has been reported several times that it would result in a \$7 to \$10 million loss in sales tax revenue.

In the end, a provision negotiated by the Wine and Spirits Wholesalers of Connecticut (WSWC), which may have short and long term benefits to the industry, passed in the budget implementer. The provision was identical to a bill offered by WSWC during the regular session. It was designed to prevent illegal shipments of alcohol directly by persons to retail premises or other unknown locations. The legislation addresses citations given to certain parties, including large retailers, for shipments of goods into the state without passing through a licensed wholesaler. As we continue into an era where the smuggling of cigarettes, alcohol, and other items is widespread and increasing, this provision may well provide incentive to cease illegal shipments of such items around the existing licensee system. In addition to the preventative measures provided by this legislation, every measure which provides the ability to audit alcohol shipments greatly benefits the Connecticut tax system. The following language was added in the special session budget implementer:

Sec. 263. (NEW) (Effective from passage) (a) No alcoholic liquor shall be sold or delivered by any wholesaler or manufacturer permittee except from such wholesaler's or manufacturer's permit premises, unless the wholesaler or manufacturer permittee has first received and inventoried the alcoholic liquor, which shall be unloaded from the delivery truck and come to rest in the warehouse facility of such wholesaler or manufacturer before being shipped to a retailer directly. The Commissioner of Consumer Protection or his or her authorized agent may inspect such wholesaler's or manufacturer's permit premises, books and records to ensure compliance with the provisions of this section. Notwithstanding the foregoing, the provisions of this section shall not apply to the sale, delivery or shipment of wine by a farm winery pursuant to subsection (a) of section 30-18 of the general statutes or to the holder of an out-of-state small winery shipper's permit for wine issued pursuant to section 30-18a of the general statutes. (b) Any person who violates the provisions of subsection (a) of this section shall have engaged in an unfair or deceptive act or practice in violation of section 42-110b of the general statutes.

# CPSA LAUNCHES NEW WEBSITE!

VISIT [WWW.CTPSA.COM](http://WWW.CTPSA.COM) TO EXPLORE!



The screenshot shows the CPSA website interface. At the top is the CPSA logo and navigation links: Home, About CPSA, News & Events, Legislative, and Join CPSA. A large banner image of beer bottles has the text "Find out more about CPSA in the Beverage Journal" and a "CLICK HERE TO LEARN MORE" button. Below the banner is a section for "Upcoming Events" with a date selector set to "November 2017". A sidebar on the left includes a "Board Meeting" section with a note: "\*\* Board Meetings are Invitation- Find out more >". The main content area features a "Our Members" section with a description: "(Members may submit their logo & website/social media page to our club... your store here!)". At the bottom is a row of member logos: i-Way Package Store, CT BEVERAGE MART, Universal DISCOUNT Package Store, SUPER SAVER SPIRITS, Max's Package Store, and Willowbrook Spirit Shop.

**CPSA's new website is user-friendly, easy to navigate on a mobile device, and packed with updated information.**

**SOME NEW FEATURES INCLUDE:**

- JOIN OR RENEW MEMBERSHIP ONLINE
- UPDATED EVENTS CALENDAR
- OPPORTUNITIES TO ADVERTISE
- INFO ON HOW TO GET IN TOUCH WITH YOUR LOCAL REPRESENTATIVES
- "THE GRAPEVINE" ARCHIVES
- PHOTO GALLERIES OF CPSA EVENTS!



Developed and owned by InfoSolve, Inc., mPower Beverage point of sale software has been designed for liquor stores of all sizes. InfoSolve has been working alongside visionary companies since 1998, helping them keep abreast of today's dynamic world of business technology in order to fully realize their ambitions.

We sell mPower Beverage directly to all of our liquor store customers without the use of re-sellers. Our hands on approach to the installation and support of mPower Beverage liquor store POS is designed to ensure your success and confidence in the software. We have created a point of sale software solution specifically designed for liquor stores that is affordable, proven, and easy to use.

VISIT [www.mpowerbeverage.com](http://www.mpowerbeverage.com) to learn more.

# AMERICANS SAY PUBLIC SAFETY FIRST FOR ALCOHOL REGULATION!

SOURCE: PUBLIC ACTION MANAGEMENT

AUTHOR: PAMELA ERICKSON



Americans are not looking for additional convenience, lower prices or more places to shop when it comes to alcohol regulation. Instead, they want a focus on public safety and better law enforcement. Those are some of the key messages from a recent national poll, commissioned by the Center for Alcohol Policy (CAP).

Why? First, the public is very supportive of alcohol regulation understanding that alcohol is not an ordinary commodity and that reducing regulations could make problems worse. Sixty-three percent said they thought alcohol regulations are "about right" in their state; only 15% said they are too restrictive and 9% said they are too lenient. Second, a sizeable portion of the public has been personally harmed by alcohol. In the CAP poll, 24% said they have experienced a "personal tragedy" because of it. In a 2017 poll conducted by the Gallup organization, 33% said that drinking had been a cause of trouble in their family. Also, 88% say they are satisfied with the "variety of alcohol

products available" and 78% say they disagree with the idea that "there are not enough places in my community to buy alcohol." In fact, 62% say increasing outlets would cause more problems. And, 54% disagree with the statement that the "price of alcohol in my community is too high."

So why would lawmakers be eager to loosen alcohol regulations, add alcohol outlets, create new (cont'd on page 7)



**TAKE CONTROL. SAVE ENERGY. SAVE MONEY.**

Freeaire is an entrepreneurial, customer-centric company that creates long lasting relationships with our clients that emphasize efficiency and success. We provide our customers with energy efficiency solutions for their refrigeration systems that save them money, help them avoid risk and help the environment.

By focusing on our customer's needs, rather than closing one job, we build longstanding relationships with our customers. Further, once our product is installed, we continue to monitor the systems to make sure that we have delivered our customers the value they were looking for. VISIT [www.freeaire.com](http://www.freeaire.com) to learn more.



# HOW TO BE POLITICALLY EFFECTIVE

A HANDBOOK FOR MEMBERS OF THE ALCOHOL BEVERAGE INDUSTRY  
SOURCE: THE AMERICAN BEVERAGE LICENSEES

The American Beverage Licensees is currently working on an updated version of a pamphlet which provides helpful information on supporting and networking with local legislators. The steps listed are geared specifically toward members of the alcohol beverage industry. The original table of contents, as well as some updated excerpts from the pamphlet can be found below. CPSA Members will have full access to the new pamphlet once it is completed.

## I. WHY GET INVOLVED?

### A. POLITICAL ACTIVITY IS CRITICAL FOR YOUR BUSINESS.

If there was ever a group of people who should have an interest in how the government works, it is the people of this industry. The alcohol beverage industry is one of the most highly taxed industries and most highly regulated industries in the United States. Every aspect of the industry from manufacture to hours of sale is regulated by one level of government or the other.

Further, because of the nature of the product you sell, and because of the strong feelings that some segments of society have about the product, you can be sure that alcohol will always be subject to high taxation, that it will always be subject to extensive regulation, and that you will always be facing efforts by some to further limit its availability to the public.

The truth of the matter is that so long as you are in the alcohol beverage business your livelihood will be at the mercy of the elected officials who directly or indirectly regulate your business. With the government playing such an important role in your business, it is just plain foolish if you are not actively involved in the political process.

### B. YOU CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Very few people truly appreciate how lucky we are to live in a democracy. Under the democratic form of government, individuals are allowed to participate and are able to make their voice heard. Most people who complain about not being able to change things have never really tried. That is not to say that a person can or should get in a position to dictate every decision a legislator or the government makes. However, anyone who is willing to work and put some time and energy into the political process can get themselves in a position where their opinion is listened to and where they are given a fair opportunity to have input on legislation affecting them.

The secret to getting yourself in a position of political influence is your willingness to invest time, energy, and money in the political process. If you can motivate yourself to do these three things, you can have real impact upon how the government works.

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# ALCOHOL & RECREATIONAL MARIJUANA

In the last legislative session, there was a major effort pursued by a number of legislators to legalize the recreational use of marijuana. Although the alcohol beverage industry stayed away from the fight, many did not. Groups of people and interest groups from law enforcement, education, doctors, and others, opposed the legislative effort.

Very few members of the alcohol beverage industry support the legalization of recreational marijuana, as they are aware of the effects of intoxicants. The retail sector, including restaurants and package stores, know the effects legalization can have, especially with younger people restricted from purchasing. It is clear that age restrictions do not always prevent under-aged individuals from obtaining age-limited products like alcohol. Marijuana will not be an exception.

It is likely that an illegal market of home grown marijuana will flourish, as it does in Colorado since recreational use was legalized there. A major danger to the public is the use of edibles which contain marijuana. These products have resulted in serious injury and illness

to those who were not aware of the potency and level of intoxication they could cause. Many edibles are produced in illegal markets, where the potency and content of each product is inaccurately reported or not reported at all. Some products are known to be laced with even more harmful substances.

A few sources have suggested that retail alcohol sellers should begin to sell marijuana since both products are intoxicants. However, most alcohol retailers are committed members of the community who promote moderation and proper use of the products they sell. Many of these persons consider the recreational use of marijuana to be a problem, especially with underage individuals and those who are likely to abuse substances. These are just a few of the reasons why CPSA has not entered the debate. There is also an overwhelming base of the public and legislators who oppose this legislation. Retail stores are strongly supported by the majority of the public and legislature with good reason.



## CPSA UPDATES AND EVENTS

*(cont'd from page 1)* legislative session begins a couple of weeks later. A legislative report will be presented, identifying concerns and opportunities for the package store industry in 2018.

One of the major upcoming discussions will be who will replace State Representative David Baram (D) after he is elected the new Probate Judge for his area of Bloomfield and Windsor. Representative Baram has been a staunch supporter of the alcohol beverage industry in Connecticut. He recognizes that the industry is a major economic driver with a strong retail sector that unlike other retail establishments, is not closing stores and forfeiting jobs due to the mail order business sector.

CPSA is already preparing for a number of issues that retailers will be subject to in the next legislative session, which begins on February 7th and ends May 9th. These issues are based on recent events, plans of others in the industry, and legislative projections. Issues that may be raised include the continued minimum bottle conflict, allowance of direct retail mail delivery, expansion of product sale to other retail sectors, bottle bill expansion to wine and spirits sales, and fee and tax increases.

***Make sure to join CPSA on January 15th at Onyx Spirits Company in East Hartford, CT to learn more!***

# AMERICANS SAY PUBLIC SAFETY FIRST

(cont'd from page 4) licenses and fail to increase funding for enforcement?

The disconnect may be due to the fact that leaders rarely hear from the general public or the public health community on this issue, but they do hear from industry representatives---especially large, national corporations that have substantial funds to pay for lobbyists and to make campaign contributions. They hear that our regulations are "antiquated". They hear that alcohol should not be treated any different from other products. They hear that customers are crying for "better prices" and greater convenience. ***These things are just not true.***

## **Here are some key results from the poll:**

1. Most important consideration for lawmakers in crafting alcohol regulations:

77% Reducing drunk driving, 70% Protecting health and public safety, 62% Reducing underage drinking, 52% Encouraging moderation, 48% Creating more jobs, 42% Increasing economic development, 28% Giving consumers more choices, 22% Lowering prices , 19% Allowing more businesses to produce and sell alcoholic products

2. A high percentage of Americans say they are satisfied with the existing system for purchasing alcohol in their state. This is true for all parts of the country, both genders and all age groups:

3. People don't want a lot of "cheap" alcohol in their community and there is majority support for stronger controls on products of high alcohol content. Fifty-five percent oppose "bargain tactics" such as free merchandise, alcohol giveaways or selling some products below cost. And, 64% indicate support for stricter controls on higher alcohol content products.

4. Support for a state-based regulatory system is very high and has increased from 62% in 2008 to 81% in 2017. Additionally, 81% say they support the three-tiered license system and 75% say it is working well.

5. So, what should lawmakers do?

The first priority is to examine alcohol related public safety issues and identify ways to prevent further "personal tragedies" or family problems.

Consider whether the current enforcement of regulations and laws is sufficient and, if not, find ways to improve.

When confronted with proposals to change regulations, consider inviting comments from law enforcement and public health about the risks and costs of such change. Resist change unless it is clear there will be no adverse impact to the current system or public health and safety.

When proponents indicate that increased jobs, business opportunities and tax revenue will flow from regulatory change, seek more detail: Are the jobs high paying or minimum wage? Will the new businesses replace current businesses? Will the additional revenue come at the cost of increased alcohol consumption? Will the change weaken or damage our current alcohol regulatory system? Will the change just replace small, local businesses with large, national businesses?

A copy of key findings in an easy-to-read format can be found on the Center for Alcohol Policy's website. (See below)

## **Sources:**

Center for Alcohol Policy, "American's Views of Alcohol Regulations, Key Findings from a National Survey, July 2017," Lori Weigel, Public Opinion Strategies available at <https://protect-us.mimecast.com/s/ANOLBzhMzRI0Tz?domain=centerforalcoholpolicy.org>

Gallup historical polls: <http://news.gallup.com/poll/1582/Alcohol-Drinking.aspx>



## Dear CPSA Members and Industry Friends,

In the past few years, CPSA has been increasingly enveloped in issues involving our members at the legislature, administrative agencies, and courts. CPSA's resources have been strained to provide these services in order to defend our stores.

We do not want anyone to mistake our successes for invulnerability. What industry members often do not see is CPSA's board members, members and lobbying team working tirelessly to defend your stores. If membership does not grow, CPSA may not be able to continue providing the services needed to succeed in the future.

Successes at the legislature and in the recent lawsuit were only possible through our small but strong core of members, dedicated officers and board members. Without financial support from a broader base of members, the organization could potentially begin to see issues larger and more severe than ever before. Recent news in Massachusetts shows what happens when the voice of the retail sector is not strong or united enough to defend itself against the efforts of those who want to take advantage of them.

We urge members to renew this year in a timely manner when the mailing arrives. The most success we have seen in expanding our membership has come from current members encouraging fellow store owners to join. Please help us strengthen the association after a very tough year so we can continue to successfully defend stores across the state.

*No One of Us... Is as Strong as All of Us.*





# No ONE OF Us... ...IS AS STRONG AS ALL OF Us!

## CPSA MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FY 2018

### APPLICANT INFORMATION

\*\* This information will NEVER be shared or distributed without the applicant's prior consent. Information will be used only for a small number of communications throughout the year. Members may opt out of automatic communications at any time by contacting our office. Mobile phone numbers will be used for billing issues only, if CPSA is unable to make contact through the business line. Mobile phone numbers are not required.

Name:

Primary/Cell Phone:

Email:

Preferred Mailing Address:

City:

State:

ZIP Code:

☐ Owner ☐ Manager

(Please check one)

☐ Package Store Membership: \$350.00 ☐ Associate Membership: \$1000.00

(Please check one)

### BUSINESS INFORMATION

Name of Business:

Business Address:

(Leave empty if same as Preferred Mailing)

City:

State:

ZIP Code:

Business Phone:

Fax:

Other:

### PAYMENT INFORMATION

Check One: ☐ VISA ☐ MC ☐ AMEX ☐ DISCOVER

Check ☐ Check #:

Name on Card:

Card Number:

CVV:

(3 digit # on back of card)

Expiration Date:

Billing Zip Code:

Amount to be charged: \$

Check if you would like to auto-renew after one year: ☐

### SIGNATURES

I authorize CPSA to process a charge to my credit card for the balance indicated above. I certify that I am an authorized user of this credit card and that I will not dispute the scheduled payments with my credit card company provided the transactions correspond to the terms indicated in this authorization form.

Cardholder Signature:

Date:

- 67% of dues are tax deductible
- Checks can be made out to "CPSA" – Please include "2018 Member Dues" in the memo & provide a phone number on the check

**THANK YOU. YOUR MEMBERSHIP IS WHAT KEEPS OUR ASSOCIATION STRONG.**



Join  
Today

No One of Us... Is as Strong as All of Us

**As the unified organization  
representing you for the last *40*  
*years*, we need your membership to  
keep our association strong.**

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PLACE  
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HERE

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Middletown, CT 06457