

THE GRAPEVINE

NEWSLETTER OF THE CONNECTICUT PACKAGE STORES ASSOCIATION



Direct Shipment of Wine: Dead for now, soon to return

THIS YEAR'S HOTTEST ISSUE POSED A BIG CHALLENGE FOR CPSA. ONLINE RETAIL GIANTS ARE CONTINUING TO PUSH FOR A WIN IN CT AT THE EXPENSE OF SMALL BUSINESSES.

One of the most persistent issues at the legislature this year was the retail sale and delivery of wine to consumers in Connecticut by out-of-state retailers and other sources.

As in the past few years, CPSA was successful in preventing the passage of this issue. However, it was found that more legislators have become involved its advocacy. This is occurring because many, if not all common carriers are refusing to deliver alcohol beverages, since many states prohibit or place limits and conditions on such deliveries that interfere with their quick delivery service business models. Requiring a signature for goods has been a major disincentive to efficient delivery.

In the past, bills brought before the legislature on this subject were

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WHY CPSA NEEDS YOU.

Legislators Support a “CT Made” Initiative

LAWMAKERS PRESENTED A NEW “CT MADE” LOGO IN FEBRUARY TO PROMOTE LOCALLY CRAFTED PRODUCTS.



A major campaign to encourage the purchase of Connecticut-made products was endorsed this legislative session by Speaker of the House, Joe Aresimowicz.

CPSA's support of the Connecticut-made movement dates back several years, as many package stores have dedicated entire shelves and sections to locally crafted beverages.

The Connecticut Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) has signs with the new “CT Made” logo available for retailers and will be promoting the program throughout the year. Representatives from CPSA participated in the first promotional event in February, along with other small retailers and manufacturers.

CPSA has also been hosting promotional programs with the Connecticut Small Brand Council (CSBC) to encourage package stores to sell wine, beer, and spirits made in the state. These events have been attended by both retailers and other local manufacturers looking to collaborate and grow.

As it was a topic of interest this session, legislators were very pleased to see and hear of the scope of Connecticut-made products currently sold in package stores. The relationship between small retailers and local manufacturers has become a critical factor in growing broad legislative support for many package store issues. The collaboration also benefits the wine, spirits and beer wholesalers, who distribute these local products.

The key to making the state's CT-Made marketing campaign

The relationship between small retailers and local manufacturers has become a critical factor in growing broad legislative support for many package store issues.

successful lies with the number of package stores who agree to sell these locally made goods, which are decisions made on-site by the owner or manager present. This makes package stores indispensable to local manufacturers.

CPSA encourages all package stores to participate in selling as many CT-made products that can be supported by their stores and customers, and to visit Connecticut's Department of Economic and Community Development (DECD) website, <http://www.ct.gov/ecd/>, and click on the “Connecticut Made” logo to find out more about the initiative. ● ● ●

Direct Shipment of Wine

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

focused on rare wines that some individuals sought to purchase from out-of-state, and have shipped directly to their homes. This most recent push comes from Fairfield County residents, who work in New York City and frequently buy from New York City retailers.

The solution to this issue seemed to lie in the concept of an amendment, which was prepared by the Wine and Spirits Wholesalers of Connecticut (WSWC). The amendment created a new permit that a package store could apply for, which would have allowed them to receive items from an out-of-state retailer that are not available from an in-state wholesaler.

As a clearance source, the retailer would have been required to accrue and remit appropriate taxes. Due to the complexity of details for such a proposal, it was not accepted by the legislature prior to the end of the session. ● ● ●

CPSA 2018 Legislative Report

ISSUES BOTH OLD AND NEW WERE MONITORED AND ACTED UPON DURING THIS MOST RECENT LEGISLATIVE SESSION, WHICH ENDED AT MIDNIGHT ON MAY 9TH, 2018. THIS REPORT WILL OUTLINE THOSE ISSUES, AND LIST ISSUES WHICH CPSA SUCCESSFULLY DEFEATED.

May 9th, 2018 marked the end of another legislative session for the Connecticut Package Stores Association. Staff members faced many of the perpetual battles from years past, but also encountered new issues, keeping everyone on their toes.

The soon-departing Governor Dannel P. Malloy did not disappoint in predictions that he would for the seventh straight year, attempt to eliminate minimum bottle pricing. This prediction was exasperated by another of his proposals which would have eliminated all posted pricing, including that of wholesalers and manufacturers. This year, these bills were taken up in the Finance Committee and the General Law Committee. CPSA organized a group of retailers in Hartford

to stand in opposition to the bills with the assistance of the Wine and Spirits Wholesalers of Connecticut, the CT Small Brand Council (CSBC), and a few other individuals and groups.

As usual, the main proponents of the bills were Total Wine and Bev Max through direct representation by an organization called the Connecticut Alcohol Retail Exchange (CARE). CARE purports to represent anyone for a fee to help "modernize liquor laws in Connecticut," regardless of how those changes may affect the industry, the economy, and consumers. Reportedly, the year COSTCO and Walmart paid into the organization, their bill was not reported from the Finance or General Law Committees.

Other opponents of package stores included big box retail stores, who sought changes to the grocery beer definition in order to allow beer in hundreds of new retail outlets.

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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 to learn more.

On Recreational Marijuana

CPSA HAS PRESENTED AN EXPLANATION OF HOW THE LEGALIZATION OF RECREATIONAL MARIJUANA MAY AFFECT PACKAGE STORES IN CONNECTICUT IF THEY ATTEMPT TO BECOME VENDORS OF THE PRODUCT.

One of the more unusual bills this year was to allow the sale, growing and use of recreational marijuana. It was an unusual bill not by the nature of what it would do, but how proponents used the bill.

One group of proponents for recreational use had strong ties to beer distribution. The group planned to distribute and sell through package stores. The problem with this is twofold. Those that regulate medical marijuana had already set a system for the distribution of medical marijuana, which involves a strong and highly regulated retail structure. The Department of Consumer Protection would not even allow pharmacies to distribute marijuana. The seller has to construct special facilities with major security and specific procedures in place, which are very expensive and difficult to meet.

Most importantly, the general public cannot access these premises. Only prequalified individuals have access to dispensaries. The cost to build and operate the facility alone is extremely high.

Another factor in the marijuana issue was that one package store expressed an interest in selling marijuana. Unfortunately, several interest groups had plans to take certain items that package stores exclusively maintain in permit definitions, such as limitations on new stores, and what other retailers are not allowed to sell like beer or wine. These interest groups were anxious for any package store to support marijuana sales, because it creates the argument that stores would then have enough with the new sales items, eliminating the need for exclusive rights and regulations on the sale of alcohol products.

There was also talk of the population ratio of permits and the

(Continued on page 8)



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CPSA 2018 Economic Survey

This survey has been prepared to determine the future actions of the retail package store industry. Various industry leaders have advanced the theory that once the economic threat imposed and advocated by state government against package stores is eliminated, they will be confident enough to expand and grow.

This survey will attempt to document the potential for this to happen. No individual's contact or personal information from this survey will be identified or distributed.

Thank you for helping the association to protect your store. Completed surveys can be sent to the Connecticut Package Stores Association by:

Email: mdaley@ctpsa.com Fax: 860-343-0014 Mail: 700 Plaza Middlesex, Middletown, CT 06457

Or, you may elect to complete the survey online, by visiting our website: www.ctpsa.com

Thank you for your participation.

Once the legislative threat of eliminating minimum bottle and other detrimental measures are no longer advocated, would you:

	YES	NO
Consider expanding your store	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Buy another store	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Renovate your store	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Are you now in a shopping center where you could expand or take a larger space?

YES	NO
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

If you could expand, would you use the space to expand the number of products you now sell?

YES	NO
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Would you consider carrying new products?

YES	NO
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Would any of those new products include those made in Connecticut?

YES	NO
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

What would those products include?

Wine	<input type="checkbox"/>
Beer	<input type="checkbox"/>
Spirits	<input type="checkbox"/>
All 3	<input type="checkbox"/>

Have you approached a financing source for money to expand, renovate, or move to a larger store?

YES	NO
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Has the financial source been reluctant to finance your plan based on negative information or proposals pending before the legislature?

YES	NO	N/A
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

What do you estimate your expenditure would be if you plan to (leave empty if zero):

Renovate your store with construction, equipment, or other costs

\$	<input type="text"/>
----	----------------------

Expand to a larger space in the same location

\$	<input type="text"/>
----	----------------------

Move to a larger space, renovate, and expand

\$	<input type="text"/>
----	----------------------

Have you been contacted in the past 6 months by a CT alcohol beverage manufacturer to sell their products?

YES	NO
<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

In which category(ies)?

Wine	<input type="checkbox"/>
Beer	<input type="checkbox"/>
Spirits	<input type="checkbox"/>
All 3	<input type="checkbox"/>
None	<input type="checkbox"/>

Are there any non-alcohol items which are complimentary to your business that you do not currently sell, but would like to?

YES

NO

☐☐

Check the items, if any, that you would be interested in selling, if you do not already.

Snack food (nuts, chips, etc.)

☐

Olives, cocktail onions

☐

Coolers, insulated wine bags, insulated cups, blue ice

☐

Cheese, dried meats, crackers

☐

I prefer not to sell any of these items

☐

Any other items, please list:

Do you participate at least 3 times per year in selling one item per month at 10% below cost?

YES

NO

☐☐

Would you like to increase the number of items sold per month at 10% below cost to:

Two (2)

☐

Five (5)

☐

Ten (10)

☐

Fifteen (15)

☐

Keep the limit to One (1)

☐

If you would like to suggest some additional services or activities to the Connecticut Package Stores Association for the Board to consider, please list your ideas below:

**** If you are interested in joining the CPSA Board, please submit your contact information (do not attach survey) to mdaley@ctpsa.com or call 860.346.7978**

Thank you for completing our survey. Please submit completed forms to:

CPSA
700 Plaza Middlesex
Middletown, CT 06457

or Fax to:
860-343-0014

or Scan and Email to:
mdaley@ctpsa.com

This survey is also available on our website at www.ctpsa.com

Whatever happened to DISCUS?

Some members of the alcohol beverage industry who have been in the business for over 25 years wonder, whatever happened to the Distilled Spirits Council of the United States (DISCUS)?

DISCUS was at one time a typical trade or professional association representing alcohol beverage manufacturers.

Before the late 80's, manufacturers, wholesalers and retailers had a common goal just like every other industry trade association. There were many other groups that did everything that they could to promote their products, assist their partners, the wholesalers and retailers, and help further the use of their products in the consumer market.

As any good trade association or professional association knows, the manufacturing level does not typically have public credibility at the consumer level. Such grassroots has always been a coveted relationship to an industry in cases of taxes and many other problems that need public support. The very credibility of products as a core are tied to retailers and their customers. In the past ten or fifteen years, DISCUS has done everything in its power to alienate its retail sector with no apparent goal or gain.

Every year during the legislative session, DISCUS makes its annual appearance to mark some obscure friction point that is certain to alienate any residual retailer loyalty.

It should come as no surprise that retailers have supported practices and policies that are not always beneficial to product manufacturers. At times, retail reactions to DISCUS interests can be gratuitously hostile, but understandable.

DISCUS policies are contrary to most other industries, who usually do whatever they can to help and motivate its industry retail sellers.

Evidently, DISCUS has not only lost its public relations book, but also has misplaced its industry growth and priority policy. Will they ever find them again? ● ● ●

Bottle Bill Update

The expansion of the bottle bill to liquor and wine bottles was defeated by the Connecticut Package Stores Association (CPSA) during the 2018 legislative session. The expansion was included in the Governor's budget and has been promoted by various environmental groups. Issues addressed in the discussion about the expansion included the increase in "nip" bottle litter and the recyclability of glass.

Glass containers have been an increasing problem for many recycling services. The lack of markets for mixed color glass and its weight have made glass a difficult item to transport, process, and sell as a finished, treated recyclable. The decision a few years ago for so-called "single stream" recycling increased this problem.

The issue of "nips" has become a major one at the legislature, as a striking increase in sales of the bottles each year has been connected to the significant litter issue. The CPSA staff has been contacted by several legislators and municipal officials regarding the specific accumulation of the bottles in certain locations.

Some entities are considering a ban on the sale of nips in a municipality, similar to the ban enacted in multiple jurisdictions on plastic bags. Other proposed solutions have been for the retailer to take back recyclables, or to institute a recycling tax at the manufacturing level. CPSA has had discussions on solutions to the problem, and will continue to work with the legislature and other public officials. One thing is certain, the association will not consider under any circumstances a take-back at retail stores.

One of the proposed substitutes to the bottle bill was advanced by the environmental community and the Wine and Beer Wholesalers of Connecticut (WSWC). The substitute, which was drafted as an amendment and filed on several bills at the end of the legislative session, would have increased the handling fee to 3 cents on all items currently included in the bottle bill.

The money would have been directed to the redemption centers and wholesalers would have been given 20% of the collected, unredeemed bottle deposits now taken by the state. Wholesalers would continue to receive the unredeemed handling fees, which they now retain. ● ● ●

CPSA 2018 Legislative Report

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A proposal from a couple of farm wineries was also submitted, which would have allowed Connecticut Farm Wineries to sell their products directly to in-state food stores. Both the beer and wine expansion proposals failed to make it out of the General Law Committee.

Also active this year were a couple of committee proposals by the Governor and others which would have added liquor and wines bottles to the state's bottle bill. These containers would have been added to mandatory deposit and take-back requirements. This legislation was also not reported from the committee. An alternative proposal to increase the handling fee was reported from committee with a provision that the increase would go to the state's recycling centers.

There were other bills that would have:

Allowed distilleries to charge for drinks at their manufacturing facility. CPSA supported the bill in an effort to promote an increase in the sales of CT made products.

CPSA also supported an increase in the quantity of beer sold by craft breweries directly to consumers from one to two cases.

Another more significant issue which returned for the third year, would have allowed the direct sale of wine by out-of-state retailers to Connecticut consumers. This bill was not reported from committee, but proponents of the bill persisted to the end of the legislative session. The Wine and Spirits Wholesalers of Connecticut (WSWC) drafted language that would only have allowed rare wines to be directly sold in the state, but only through a package store, and only if the wine was not available through a Connecticut wholesaler.

ISSUES DEFEATED BY CPSA IN 2018 SESSION:

DEFEATED: Elimination of Minimum Bottle Pricing

DEFEATED: Elimination of all pricing by wholesalers and manufacturers

DEFEATED: Addition of up to 20 items per month that could be priced 10% below cost

DEFEATED: Allow Connecticut Farm Wines to be sold in food stores

DEFEATED: Require \$15 per hour minimum wage and full paid family leave

DEFEATED: Mandate inclusion of liquor and wine bottles in the bottle bill, requiring retailers to take back items

DEFEATED: Increase bottle bill deposit from 5 cents to 10 cents

DEFEATED: Allow retailers from out-of-state to sell via mail order directly to Connecticut consumers

DEFEATED: Change definition of grocery beer permit to allow all box stores to sell beer

DEFEATED: Allow box stores to have both beer and package store permits

DEFEATED: Allow sale of beer in gas stations

DEFEATED: Expansion allowing a municipal sales tax to be added to the sale of your product and the services you receive

DEFEATED: A one cent decrease in bottle deposit redeemed by the consumer

DEFEATED: Allow DCP Commissioner to adopt ●●●

On Recreational Marijuana

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

public safety issues it would create. No one in a regulatory agency would even agree to allow package stores to sell the product. The real agenda was to let package stores take the bait, and go for the sale on a bill that would not and may never pass the General Assembly to achieve a different goal. It would be the impetus needed to initiate a bill on the transfer of function and change to the retail sale of alcohol beverages, which would pass the legislature and force many stores out of business. ●●●

CPSA 2018 Golf Tournament

JUNE 13, 2018 | WHITNEY FARMS GOLF CLUB

CPSA would like to thank all of the sponsors, volunteers, and Whitney Farms staff, who helped make the 2018 CT Package Stores Association Golf Tournament yet another huge success! Golfers from every corner of the liquor industry came together on June 13, 2018 and played the beautiful course at Whitney Farms Golf Club, while enjoying breakfast, lunch, and refreshments sponsored by our generous supporters. Participants ended the day with a delicious dinner and raffle in the Stone Barn Restaurant. Raffle prizes included everything from smart watches and Bose sound systems to grills and VIP tickets to the Travelers Celebrity Pro Am. CPSA staff and members are grateful to share this day with all who attend each year and wish everyone a safe and happy summer.



THANK YOU TO OUR 2018 GOLF TOURNAMENT SPONSORS



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THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR SPONSORS, GOLFERS, AND VOLUNTEERS
FOR MAKING THE 2018 CPSA GOLF TOURNAMENT A GREAT SUCCESS



*For more pictures of this year's tournament, please visit www.ctpsa.com or
www.thebeveragejournal.com!

Why CPSA Needs You.

Since its incorporation in 1943, the CT Package Stores Association has worked to protect you— the hardworking men and women in the retail liquor industry. This letter provides an explanation of what your dues support.

Each month, CPSA's board members and government affairs team gather to discuss new and ongoing issues affecting the industry, and come up with strategies to keep our stores secure. Some meetings are easier than others, but recent developments have led to a string of very difficult and in-depth discussions.

As the only association specifically protecting small package stores in Connecticut, defeating harmful legislation each year in a state that is desperately seeking new revenue streams is a herculean task. It requires dedication and a highly skilled and knowledgeable team that constantly stays on top of local and nationwide trends. CPSA has been fortunate to retain leaders with decades of experience and a long history of accomplishments. However, each passing year brings new obstacles—some more severe than others. It is for this reason that we publish the list of bills that are defeated or passed at the end of each legislative session.

Over the past three years, CPSA has been forced to double up on efforts, as a few big box stores banded together to try to break down the three-tier system in a lawsuit against the state. The CPSA team worked tirelessly to keep Connecticut from becoming one of many states without laws protecting a small business environment. With the help of financial support from our members, we were able to assist in defeating Total Wine in the courts, which they have appealed.

Although it may sound redundant to some after decades of hearing it—without CPSA, hundreds of businesses would be closing their doors for good. This has been proven by the many calls and emails CPSA receives from other package store associations across the country, asking how we have managed to protect the diverse market run by families and members of the community from being shut down by a few big box stores and online retail. Just recently, CPSA had a huge influx of calls from New York, requesting help in their battle to avoid the loosening of online liquor sale restrictions.

The answer to each association is always the same: CPSA cannot do what it does without its members. The CPSA team cannot continue working late nights and long meetings without support. The association understands that sometimes, it is hard to see where member dues are going. Each piece of legislation listed as defeated in the CPSA 2018 legislative report had a strategy behind it that involved countless hours of planning and execution by expert members of the association. The list provided does not include the many harmful ideas defeated by CPSA before they were even drafted. There are many meetings, events, fundraisers, hours of research, correspondence and more that require financial backing. Without dues, CPSA would not have been able to participate in the Total Wine lawsuit, which Total has won in other states, most recently in Massachusetts.

While our unsupportive Governor may be departing after these eight long years, threats to our retail establishments will remain—and they are already working on finding their next advocates. From box stores and gas stations to mail order and supermarkets, everyone is fighting for a little slice of something they don't have—forcing the quality of products, service, and variety of options down. As the craft beverage industry has proven, "super" or "big" markets aren't always better. These giants that seek to shut down small retail and small manufacturers are threatened by the quality of products and service you offer, which they cannot. Do not let them take away your unique ability to provide great products and a more personal shopping experience, which not only benefits Connecticut consumers, but those small manufacturers, distributors, and other local businesses that also believe in the importance of options and exceptional service.

We have always asked for a one-year contribution of just \$350.00 from each store. Other associations charge more, but CPSA has fought year after year to keep membership rates the same. Some store owners have referred to CPSA membership as "the cheapest business insurance money can buy."

CPSA accepts membership year round, so it is never too late to join. On the next page, there is a membership form. Please consider what CPSA does for your store and others, and submit membership today if you haven't already. To our loyal membership base— we are so grateful for your support. To our new members— welcome, and thank you for becoming a part of a hardworking and strong community of families and friends with safe business practices in a vibrant and growing local industry.



No ONE OF US... ...IS AS STRONG AS ALL OF US!

CPSA MEMBERSHIP INVOICE 2018

CPSA MEMBER 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. Thank you!

Owner/Manager Name:

☐ Renewing Member ☐ New Member
(Please check one)

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

To pay via Credit Card, visit WWW.CTPSA.COM
or call 860-346-7978

Check ☐ Check #:

- 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

Once payment is received, members will be mailed the 2018 CPSA Membership Decal, which can be displayed in your store window or anywhere you choose!

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



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