



January 22, 2024

Senator Hickman – Senate Chair of the Veterans and Legal Affairs Committee

Representative Supica - House Chair of the Veterans and Legal Affairs Committee

Members of the Veterans and Legal Affairs Committee

My name is Carrie Rand-Anastasiades, and I am the Director of Northeast States for Wine Institute.

Wine Institute, a public policy association of over 1,000 California wineries and affiliated suppliers dedicated to advocating the responsible consumption and enjoyment of wine, would like to comment on LD 2148 An Act to Establish Common Carrier Reporting for the Direct Shipment of Wine.

Direct to consumer shipment of wine has been utilized by Maine residents for many years and since COVID, people across the country have become more accustomed to shipping products to their homes. Currently 32 States have some form of model legislation on the books regulating carriers that deliver alcohol to consumers, including Connecticut, Vermont and New Hampshire. They are standard in nature and ensure minors do not have access to alcohol left at a resident's doorstep and they are a cross check for the government to make sure appropriate permits were taken, and taxes paid. In order to streamline LD 2148 with surrounding states, we ask that you remove the "quantity shipped" from line 28 B, of the information a carrier must report. Quantity of bottles shipped is not something the carrier would know or be able to find out. Depending on how the goods were packaged it would be difficult for them to even estimate, based off the weight of the box. If this were to remain in the bill, carriers would not be able to comply. In addition, no other surrounding state requires this information. The weight, number of bottles shipped as well as the cost would all be reported by the direct shipper to BABLO, and they would be subject to audit. Because of this, we feel that there is sufficient cross check to ensure that all taxes were being paid appropriately.

Maine consumers greatly enjoy direct to consumer sales, and adding safeguards around their shipment is a laudable goal. We just ask that it is done in a way that allows carriers to easily comply, which makes the process smooth for all involved.

If you have any questions regarding these comments, please feel free to contact me.

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