

Testimony in Support of LD1456

Nicholas Bonadies, President, Belleflower Brewing Company

Thank you, Senator Hickman, Representative Supica, and Members of the Committee:

My name is Nicholas Bonadies, and I am a resident of Portland, here today as the President of Belleflower Brewing Company. I appreciate the opportunity to speak with you and to offer my strong support for the proposed legislation.

Belleflower is a family-owned and operated brewery, run by my family and the Page family. We currently employ 15 people, including the owners. Like many others in Maine's brewing community, we are proud to be part of a vibrant and growing industry that is deeply rooted in our local economy. Maine's unique natural resources—like the bounty of Androscoggin County and the waters of Lake Sebago—have helped make our state a national leader in craft brewing.

Since launching our relatively small brewery, we've invested over a million dollars into equipment, professional services, and skilled trades. The cost and complexity of building a true production-capable facility is significant—and its impact is far-reaching, from the construction work itself to the malt we purchase from Maine farmers.

But the reality is: we operate on a very narrow seasonal window. Summer tourism keeps many of us afloat, as visitors seek to experience the flavors, stories, and craftsmanship that make Maine special. They come to connect with a piece of what it means to be a Mainer—something we strive to represent through our brands.

Unfortunately, under current law, retail licenses can be obtained with few constraints—no meaningful requirements for production capacity or space. This undermines the value of the hard work and investment that go into building a true production brewery. It can also confuse consumers about what a brewery is and does. As the industry matures, we're seeing more businesses doing the bare minimum to qualify for licensing, without contributing meaningfully to the state's manufacturing economy.

We believe Maine breweries can do more—*should* do more—to honor the legacy built by the brewers who came before us. Updating the statute to ensure fair, equitable access to market for all beverage manufacturers will help maintain a healthy, competitive landscape. It will support job creation, reward real investment in manufacturing, and protect the integrity of Maine's craft beverage industry.

Thank you for your time and consideration. I urge you to support this important legislation. I'm happy to answer any questions or continue this discussion further.

Nicholas Bonadies
Portland
LD 1456

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