



Maine Grocers &  
Food Producers  
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**IN SUPPORT: LD 1582 An Act to Clarify the Prohibition on the Sale of Beverages in Plastic Containers**

Dear Senator Tepler - Chair, Representative Doudera - Chair, and members of the committee on Environment and Natural Resources,

My name is Christine Cummings and I am the Executive Director of the Maine Grocers & Food Producers Association (MGFPA). The Maine Grocers & Food Producers Association is a business trade association representing Maine's food community; Main Street businesses, including independently owned and operated grocery stores and supermarkets, food and beverage producers and processors, manufacturers, wholesalers, distributors, and supportive service companies. MGFPA represents more than 30% of Maine's agency stores.

Over the past several years, we've seen a strong interest in consumer preferences towards 'ready-to-drink' cocktails (R2Ds). They have become one of the fastest-growing segments in the market, especially among consumers who prioritize convenience, flavor variety, and quality. The RTD segment is growing at +9.6%.<sup>\*1</sup> Products like 'BuzzBallz' are at the forefront of this movement, offering a portion-controlled option that resonates with today's consumers.

However, Maine's agency stores are currently missing out on the opportunity to sell BuzzBallz. BuzzBallz are not yet authorized for sale in our state, putting our agency stores at a competitive disadvantage compared to neighboring states where these products are available. Maine consumers are aware of these products – they see them on social media, in stores when traveling, or at out-of-state retailers. They want to buy them locally, but they can't.

Permitting these ready-to-drink cocktails and other emerging product categories in like-packaging helps Maine businesses tap into growing consumer trends and could boost local manufacturing. We support defining "closure device" so that products with these tops may be permitted for sale in Maine.

Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

*Christine Cummings*

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<sup>1</sup> \*Nielsen, Total US CONV, Total US XAOC, Segment Wine + Spirit RTD, 52 weeks ending 2024-08-10