

Andrew Bielecki
VASSALBORO
LD 1456

Dear Senator Hickman, Representative Supica, and Members of the Committee,

My name is Andrew Bielecki, and I am a resident of Vassalboro. I also serve as the Director of Operations for Sidereal Farm Brewery in Vassalboro. Thank you for your time and consideration of my testimony in support of the proposed changes to this bill.

Our small brewery began operations in 2022 on our 22-acre farm. Starting with five employees who resided in Vassalboro, Winslow, and Bangor, we have since grown to create 15 jobs, now employing residents from Vassalboro and many surrounding communities. This growth has been made possible by the significant support from Maine's legislation and the craft beer community. Alongside the increase in our workforce, we have also made substantial capital improvements, including the addition of numerous fermentation vessels and a large beer garden over the past two and a half years.

As the current law is structured, the allowance of virtually unlimited retail licenses without any significant production requirements or investment in our Maine economy is concerning. This situation has the potential to devalue the investments we have made in our employees, land, and equipment. Clarifying the language in this statute will help ensure a fair and equal access to the market for businesses like ours, which in turn will secure the continued investment in Maine-based job creation and the local manufacturing of craft beverages.

Once again, I appreciate your time and consideration today. I respectfully ask for your support of this important legislation.

Sincerely,
Andrew