

Testimony of the Maine Municipal Association
In Opposition To
LD 2160 - An Act to Modify Provisions of Law Affecting Small Distilleries

February 17, 2026

Senator Hickman, Representative Supica, and members of the Veterans and Legal Affairs Committee, my name is Rebecca Lambert, and I am providing testimony in opposition to LD 2160 on behalf of the Maine Municipal Association's (MMA) elected 70-member Legislative Policy Committee (LPC). For reference, MMA is a nonpartisan, nonprofit member service organization and aims to help provide policy solutions that work for all residents in Maine and the LPC guides MMA's advocacy efforts and establishes positions on bills of municipal interest.

Municipal leaders support small distilleries and want to see them succeed. They are entrepreneurs, job creators, and community partners, who have contributed to revitalizing downtowns and drawing tourism. Our testimony is not about limiting their success but more about preserving municipal authority.

The concern among our members lies with the provisions of the bill that would allow small distilleries to offer beer, wine, or spirits of other small manufacturers at their establishment. In current law, in order for a craft distiller to offer anything other than their own products, it would require them to obtain a license, similar to a restaurant, lounge, or tavern, which requires municipal approval. Allowing the sale of outside products effectively converts these locations into a hybrid retail establishment, without subjecting them to the same local review, zoning scrutiny, or community input required of other businesses.

Local governments are responsible for land use planning, traffic management, critical infrastructure, public safety and respecting the diverse needs of their residents. They are the ones who hear from residents when parking becomes strained, when operating hours expand, or when a business amends its scope of services. Removing municipal ability to review and approve these changes strips communities of their voice in decisions that directly affect them in many ways.

If a distillery wishes to expand its business model, it should be able to make that case locally. Many municipalities are open to economic development and would consider such requests thoughtfully. What this bill does is eliminate that conversation altogether.

Thank you for your time and considering the municipal perspective.