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Testimony of Rep. Lori K. Gramlich presenting

LD 846, An Act to Require Direct Wine Shippers to Comply with Maine Beverage Container Laws

Before the Joint Standing Committee on Veteran and Legal Affairs

Good afternoon, Senator Hickman, Representative Supica and distinguished colleagues of the Veterans and Legal Affairs Committee. My name is Lori Gramlich, and I proudly represent House District 131, the lovely seaside community of Old Orchard Beach.

I am here before you today to present **LD 846, An Act to Require Direct Wine Shippers to Comply with Maine Beverage Container Laws**.

It recently came to my attention that the Wine Direct to Consumer Law allows wine to be shipped directly to Maine adult consumers, bypassing the Maine Beverage Container Redemption Program, often known as the "Bottle Bill."

This exemption provision for non-compliance is inconsistent with all that Maine is striving to achieve with recycling and redemption policies. Additionally, this exemption allows out-of-state wineries to bypass the regulatory provision that in-state vintners must comply with and is thus inconsistent.

As the House chair of the Environment and Natural Resources Committee, or ENR, I not only have personal interest to ensure we are doing all that we can to protect our environment but also a policy commitment to ensure that the environmental laws and regulations for compliance are uniform and consistent.

We have a large number of bills that will be before us in the ENR Committee this legislative session. We will be reviewing policies concerning the Bottle Bill program; there are multiple bills filed to review the redemption system and define stakeholder efficiencies. I also understand that your committee is expecting a stakeholders report from the Bureau of Alcoholic Beverages & Lottery Operations regarding all aspects of Direct To Consumer issues.

Included in this list and hopefully in the final report is the recommendation that the Veterans and Legal Affairs Committee require all Direct To Consumer shipper permits to comply with the Maine Bottle Bill program as currently defined with Title 38, Chapter 33.

In anticipation of the BABLO stakeholder report, I offer LD 846 as a vehicle to directly address the issue of Bottle Bill compliance for all wine purchased in Maine.

I appreciate your consideration to provide a level playing field for all wine manufacturers. I encourage your support for this bill, and I look forward to working with the committee on this policy initiative.

I am happy to try to answer any questions; however, there are others here who will come after me with more information on this issue.

Thank you.