

April 24, 2023  
Veterans & Legal Affairs  
Public Hearing - LD 1695

Good morning distinguished committee members,  
My name is Kristina Hansen. I am the co-founder and general manager of Round Turn Distilling in Biddeford where we produce the Bimini Gin family of products. I am here today to testify in support of LD 1695.

Since our opening in June of 2015, we have had the ability to connect directly with our local community and customers through our downtown tasting room. In-person retail sales of Bimini Gin constitutes a significant percentage of our revenue, afforded by the privilege of being able to sell our gin at our facility without having to operate as a full agency store. It is our hope that this bill is voted out of committee "Ought to Pass" so that we can expand our community to include the whole state, particularly areas where our product is not available through local agents.

There is precedent for this type of change. Maine lawmakers have approved other measures designed to aid small in-state producers like us. There were times in our first year of business where our tasting room "sold out" of retail bottles, not because our entire inventory had been cleaned out, but because we simply sold through the cases of our product that we had to purchase from the state warehouse and have delivered back to us. Thankfully, in 2016, an amendment was passed that allowed us to simply track the inventory that passed through our tasting room, meaning we could now easily move product from our warehouse to our tasting room shelves and settle up with the state on a monthly basis, a system very similar to the sales reporting outlined in this bill. We can also now sell at farmer's markets and at tasting events. These provisions have allowed us to expand our presence as a small Maine company selling directly to Maine consumers, and we believe that LD 1695 can serve as the newest phase in this progression toward growing Maine's craft distilling sector and the state economy as a whole.

We respectfully ask the members of this committee to consider the benefits of this bill and to vote out LD 1695 "Ought to Pass."

I thank you for your time and wish you a pleasant and productive week.

Kristina Hansen  
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