



Maine Grocers &  
Food Producers  
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IN SUPPORT - LD 494 'An Act to Update and Clarify Certain Provisions of State Liquor and Lottery Laws'

Dear Senator Hickman - Chair, Representative Supica - Chair, and the Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs,

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 is supportive of the proposed new purveyor license; first and foremost, expanding spirits tastings enhances consumer education and the opportunity to sample the variety of spirit products available at market leading to informed purchasing decisions. Customers increasingly seek experiential shopping, and the ability to taste a spirit before purchasing or enjoy it in a cocktail format sample provides a more engaging and satisfying retail experience. It is also important to note that traditional grocers may be less inclined to take full advantage of this license type due to operational differences and logistical challenges in more curated tastings. This means that specialty retailers, smaller beverage-centric shops will likely be the primary beneficiaries of this change.

Anecdotally, we heard that there may be interest to expand individualized, curated tastings to include malt-liquors and wine. However, we understand the regulatory challenges paired with ensuring fresh product and do not want to deter the advancement of the new license type this session, but appreciate future conversation as to how to best achieve expanding tastings.

Sec. A-6. 28-A MRSA §453-C, sub-§1 adds that 'A reselling agent may sell fortified wine to a retail licensee for on-premises consumption.' This change could lessen barriers for restaurants, bars, and other on-premise establishments that seek to easily source specialty and high-quality fortified wines through local agency resellers.

Our understanding is that Sec. A-19. 28-A MRSA §1402, sub-§2 is similar to LD 262 also heard today and we do not have specific objections to expanding the premises, or locations, of tastings. We understand there may be urgency as LD 262 is submitted as an emergency measure outside of the Department's bill.

Sec. D-1. 28-A MRSA §710 repeals the language around "Advertising signs". MGFPA did not specifically hear any feedback from our members. Like any other category of goods, clear and visible signage helps customers make informed purchasing decisions, discover new products, and navigate the store efficiently and we appreciate the opportunity for retailers to best determine how to market their product lines without arbitrary restrictions.

We are appreciative of the proposed common-sense updates to continue to modernize Maine's approach to alcohol beverage retailing and support opportunity for business growth. Thank you for the opportunity to provide testimony.

*Christine Cummings*

Christine Cummings  
Executive Director