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Testimony of Representative Dan Shagoury introducing
LD 1033, An Act to Regulate Alcoholic Beverage Competitions
Before the Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs

Good morning, Senator Hickman, Representative Supica and members of the Joint Standing Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs. I am Representative Dan Shagoury, and I represent House District 55 - the communities of Hallowell, Manchester and West Gardiner. I come before you today to introduce **LD 1033, An Act to Regulate Alcoholic Beverage Competitions**.

The background for this bill is very straightforward. One of my constituents, Christy Hemenway, runs a meadery in West Gardiner. About a year ago, she approached me with the idea for this bill. She explained to me that she was looking into holding a judged competition for mead and found that the laws in Maine do not allow for the type of event she had in mind. She then asked me if I would be willing to submit a bill to make the necessary adjustment to the law to allow for competitions, and I agreed.

She explained that the kind of judged competition they have in other states doesn't only provide a fun opportunity to try a variety of different meads, but also allows for them to be rated against each other. The judges would not only taste the mead and rank them, but also state what each mead's strengths and weaknesses are. This helps the makers improve their product.

My constituent will be speaking after me, and I think any questions about these types of competitions would be best saved for her. Even though I have learned a lot about mead, tasting competitions and Maine's alcoholic beverage laws over the last year, I am still far from an expert.

Briefly, what this bill will do is define the parameters of these events and make the necessary exceptions to the law to allow for a small number of authorized, judged competitions to be permitted each year.

We have been working with BABLO through the development of this bill, and they have some suggested amendments I would like made to the bill. They will provide testimony in more detail concerning these changes, but on their recommendation, I would like to amend the bill in the following ways:

- Exclude home distilled spirits from the bill. Home beer/wine producers may participate.
- Require the permit holder to be a licensee or certificate of approval holder. This changes this bill in that it no longer allows a home producer to be the host.
- Require that a nationally chartered group be involved to ensure the competition is conducted properly.
- Allow for BABLO to have rulemaking authority for the final details of the bill, such as moving alcohol to/from the event. These can be minor technical rules.

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to working with you on this bill, and I will be glad to answer any questions.