

TESTIMONY IN SUPPORT OF LD 591
AN ACT Regarding Agency Liquor Store Licensing

Senator Lucchini, Representative Caiazzo and Members of the Veterans and Legal Affairs Committee. My name is Debra Hart and I am a resident of Manchester, Maine. I own Hart Public Policy and I am testifying today in support of LD 591, an Act Regarding Agency Liquor Store Licensing on behalf of my client, Hannaford Supermarkets.

Hannaford was founded in 1883 by brothers Arthur and Howard Hannaford. From what was a humble beginning of selling fruits and vegetables in Portland, the company has grown to 63 supermarkets located throughout Maine and employs 9,780 people at their retail locations along with an additional 886 professionals working at the Scarborough campus for a total of 10,666 associates statewide. At the 63 supermarket locations all have the privilege of also being an agency liquor licensee. It is a partnership with the State that benefits both the state and the company with the responsible sale of alcohol.

In all Hannaford stores, the company strives to provide its' customers the opportunity to purchase a number of products in addition to grocery staples as well as to participate in community and sustainability efforts. At Hannaford these include recycling opportunities for cardboard, plastic bags and other paper products in addition to a clean and streamlined bottle redemption process. All stores also include the sale of beer and wine, which is a separate category from spirits and run through a different distribution system. And currently at 57 stores in Maine, you will find a pharmacy where people can not only get prescription drugs but also a number of vaccines and some testing services.

The State is the regulatory arm for the sale of spirits in Maine and there is, as you know, a limit on the number of agency liquor stores allowed in a municipality. Over the years some of those limits, or tiers, have changed slightly when there was a need to increase them. We are hopeful this change from eight to nine agency stores in a municipality with a population over

20,000 can be enacted. This would allow one additional license in that category and though there is no guarantee that Hannaford would be awarded that license, they would like the opportunity to be able to apply for that license.

Thank you for your time and attention and I'd be willing to respond to any questions you may have or provide additional information.