



Maine Brewers' Guild
PO Box 2817
South Portland, ME 04116

1/10/2022

Dear Members of the Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs,

On behalf of the Maine Brewers' Guild, the nonprofit trade association that represents Maine brewers, we are requesting this committee's support to further amend L.D. 1643, "An Act To Correct Errors, Inconsistencies and Conflicts in and To Revise the State's Liquor Laws," to clarify the definition of 'malt liquor' in a way that affirms the right for Maine breweries to include fruit and other adjunct ingredients in their brews with the applicable malt liquor tax rates to be imposed on these brews.

This would be in line with the federal taxation policy for malt liquor, which includes ample allowances for fruit and other adjunct ingredients to be included in malt liquor. The amendment would only serve to provide further clarity for industry participants and regulators and would not be any substantive change.

Today's craft beer brewers must innovate to succeed, and this includes brewing new recipes and getting beer to market in a timely manner. That said, it is worth noting that Maine brewers have been brewing fruited beers for decades and have received international recognition and awards for these brews.

A clear definition of 'malt liquor' which expressly permits the rights of Maine breweries to include these adjunct ingredients without further attestations is necessary and critical. A substantial number of Maine brewers have had their label approvals delayed due to the perceived lack of clarity in this definition, and a failure to act on this issue risks further stifling our industry's ability to compete.

We are grateful for the Department of Administrative and Financial Services attention to this matter and agree with them that this bill is the best vehicle to resolve this issue.

The Maine Brewers' Guild will gladly work with this committee, DAFS, and any other parties on discussions to address this issue and we appreciate your consideration of this request.