



January 28, 2026

Senator Craig Hickman, Chair
Representative Laura Supica, Chair
Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs
100 State House Station
Augusta, ME 04333

RE: LD 2160, An Act to Modify Provisions of Law Affecting Small Distilleries

Dear Senator Hickman, Representative Supica, and members of the Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs,

On behalf of RSVP Discount Beverages, located at 887 Forest Avenue in Portland, I appreciate the opportunity to provide comments regarding Section 6 of the bill.

Most of the agency liquor stores in Maine are not owned or operated by big box chains. They are run by people like Cathy Sullivan, who started at RSVP as a cashier, worked her way up over the next twenty years, and took the opportunity to purchase the business with her brother back in the early 2000s. RSVP has over 30 employees, and they all have great pay and great benefits. RSVP is also the 2nd largest reseller in the State.

Section 6 would allow small distilleries to bypass the existing control model and sell their product directly to bars and restaurants, rather than through a reseller. Resellers like RSVP would feel the direct financial impact of this change. Notably, the Commerce Clause may prohibit this policy if in-state distilleries are allowed to sell directly but out-of-state distilleries are prohibited from doing so.

We recognize – and support – the goals of promoting small, Maine owned businesses and giving them every opportunity to succeed. RSVP carries

local products on our retail shelves and makes them available to our wholesale customers. We prioritize bringing in local items that our customers specifically request. We use "Local" signage tags to highlight these products and draw customer attention to them on the shelves.

We hope that continued efforts to support small, Maine distilleries do not come at the expense of other small, Maine businesses.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Newell A. Augur