



Wild Hart Distillery  
26 Sage Ct  
Shelburne, VT 05482

Senator Ram Hinsdale,

I am writing in regards to bill [H.470](#) which is currently on the House calendar and should be referred to your committee early next week. Of particular significance is the provision related to increasing the annual limit of fourth-class licenses from 10 to 20. As a Senator from my district I am writing to underscore the importance of this provision in supporting small owner operated distilleries such as mine in Vermont. I would be happy to speak further on this issue including testifying at committee meetings. Key points I would like to share include the following:

- I live in the South End in Burlington and I own a small distillery in Shelburne, the life of which has mostly existed during the pandemic. As a new company we did not have access to any Pandemic Assistance for state or federal grants nor Payment Protection, I'm happy to share details of how new companies such as mine fell through the cracks of the eligibility criteria. While we expand each year, the pandemic stunted our business growth, askew to expected growth in our business plan and this provision will be an instrumental tool in our recovery.
- This bill increases the number of permits we are allowed to obtain to sell at more venues, in turn we are able to increase sales as well as marketing of our products, serving a dual purpose of increasing short-term and long-term revenue and stability.
- Each geographic location in which we attend a farmers' market also sees increases the sales of our products at Vermont 802 Liquor Stores, essentially a win/win for us as well as Vermont. It increases revenue to the state rather than be competitive which is why Commissioner Knight is supportive.
- This provision creates more opportunities for small distillery businesses to grow and prosper in Vermont. As we see new distilleries emerge this will be a strategic lever in their development and success.

Thank you for the opportunity to share my support and insight on this issue, I would be happy to discuss this further with you or the committee at your convenience.

Take care,

Craig Stevens