

From: **Michelle Miller** <michelle@vtwinemerchants.com>

Date: Mon, Feb 5, 2018 at 1:19 PM

Subject: House Bill 710 and Senate Bill 189

To: "msirotkin@leg.state.vt.us" <msirotkin@leg.state.vt.us>, "Sirotkin.senate@gmail.com" <Sirotkin.senate@gmail.com>

Good afternoon,

My name is Michelle Miller. I am a current resident of Burlington. I am writing in opposition to House Bill 710 and Senate Bill 189, the craft beer and winery franchise bills.

As you might have noticed from my email, this bill will have a large impact on my job, and possibly eventually my employment in this state.

These bills are not needed. The current network has led to significant growth in Vermont craft beer and Vermont wine brands. I have seen first hand what the current laws bring, and that is more competition, and more choices for consumers, and more growth for the wholesale industry leading to more growth and room in the market all the way down to the vineyards.

These bills try to fix a problem that doesn't exist - craft brewers and Vermont wineries being able to get their products to consumers. The current distributor network offers craft brewers merchandising, advertising, promotions, warehouses, equipment, trucks, a sales force, and warehouse crews to assist with the distribution of their beverages. The best way to get a craft brewer or small winery on store shelves is through a distributor. I've personally seen the ability distributors have to bring unknown products to market and seen them then flourish. Small vineyards, small companies and we were able to make a name for them thanks to a committed established network.

No one wins with these bills. Consumers won't have access to small, growing beer and wine brands. Craft brewers and small wineries lose vital marketing know-how and retail relationships. Distributors will lose the ability to bring on new craft beer and wine brands and it will cost existing jobs, like mine.

These bills could result in jobs lost in the industry I work in. I am very concerned about the impact this bill will have on my job. I'm 35 and would love to continue to plan my future here in

VT and it's thanks to employers like mine that have been able to thrive in this market and provide well-paying jobs that I can currently plan to do so. I'm certain if the proposed legislation passes I will have to consider leaving this great state I love when my employer can no longer afford me or to grow my career as they have been able to in the last 8 years. My employer is able to pay me a fair wage and has provided me growth on my current path, that's pretty hard to find in VT lately. I am the target demographic we (as a state) are trying to keep in Vermont, as well are most of the 26 employees here, all of whose jobs could be as stake if this proposed legislation goes through.

Please oppose House Bill H.701 and Senate Bill 189.

Thank you for considering my view.

Michelle Miller

The Vermont Wine Merchants

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