



WineAmerica News Brief

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PRESS RELEASE: HR 5034 (CARE ACT)

Proposed legislation recently introduced in Congress would offer federal backing to anti-competitive and discriminatory state alcohol beverage laws. Supported by the National Beer Wholesalers Association (NBWA), this damaging bill would give wholesalers the ability to use state law to insulate themselves from competition. As an organization of more than 800 wineries in 48 states, we strongly oppose this effort.

NBWA's legislation would, without any justification, allow states considering alcohol beverage measures to virtually ignore the Commerce Clause and federal law in all but the narrowest circumstances. This is a dangerous precedent since courts and Congress have historically struck a careful balance when considering state alcohol laws between the Twenty-first Amendment—that gives states authority over the importation, transportation and delivery of alcohol within their borders—and other parts of the Constitution.

By seeking a blunt reconfiguration of the relationship between the Constitution and state alcohol law, NBWA is asking Congress to put a thumb on the scale in favor of their monopoly distribution system. The proposed legislation, while couched as addressing public safety and states' rights, is merely a smoke screen for a power grab by beer wholesalers that would stunt competition, reverse years of long-established judicial precedent, and severely limit consumer choice.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bill Nelson'.

Bill Nelson
President