



April 23, 2020

Honorable Steven T. Mnuchin
Secretary of the Treasury
Department of the Treasury
Washington, DC

Dear Mr. Secretary:

On behalf of The American Distilled Spirits Alliance, Beer Institute, Distilled Spirits Council of the United States, National Association of Beverage Importers, Wine and Spirits Wholesalers of America, and Wine and Spirits Shippers Association, we write to urge the Administration to provide parity in terms of the deferral of the payment of federal excise taxes for domestic and imported wine, beer and distilled spirits in response to the outbreak of COVID-19.

We appreciate the Treasury Department's recent efforts to provide financial relief to affected industries during the unprecedented outbreak of COVID-19; however, we are concerned with the scope and limitations of the recently announced 90-day deferral for the payment of certain duties, taxes and fees by importers for consumption withdrawals in March or April 2020. Under the recent announcement, importers are required to demonstrate that they suffered a "significant financial hardship" in order to qualify for the extended payment deadline for certain duties, fees, and taxes for 90 days. As almost every business in the United States is experiencing interruption and hardship in their business operations, the additional requirements placed by the Agency in order to qualify for the relief are not consistent with the President's instructions to the Treasury Department on March 13, 2020 "to provide relief from tax deadlines to Americans who have been adversely affected by the COVID-19 emergency, as appropriate, pursuant to 26 U.S.C. 7805A."

Utilizing this authority, the Treasury Department postponed the income tax payment date for all Americans for 90 days from April 15 to July 15, 2020. Similarly, the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB) relied on this legal authority for its 90-day postponement of payment dates through July 1, 2020. There is no requirement for either postponement to demonstrate a "significant financial hardship." These actions by the Treasury Department and the Administration continue to give Americans and many businesses relief as they adjust to the COVID-19 economy and marketplace.

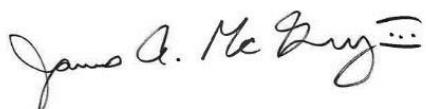
The beverage alcohol industry directly and indirectly employs millions of jobs and billions of dollars in wages, Federal and State taxes, and employee benefits. In these difficult times, the industry has contributed millions to relief efforts including those aimed at helping workers

impacted by the closures of restaurants and bars. The importation activities are key components of the supply chain in these essential businesses.

Importers of beer, wine, and spirits pay the same federal excise tax as domestic producers. Accordingly, pursuant to 26 U.S.C. 7805A we urge the Administration to revise its most recent action to remove the “significant financial hardship” requirement to provide parity between importers and domestic suppliers in terms of the ability to defer payment of the federal excise tax and extend such deferrals for consumption withdrawals through July 1, 2020.

Thank you for this opportunity to provide our views, and we would be pleased to provide any additional information or clarification as requested.

Sincerely,



Jim McGreevy
President & CEO
Beer Institute



Chris R. Swonger
President & CEO
Distilled Spirits Council of the U.S.



Matt Dogali
President & CEO
American Distilled Spirits Alliance



Michelle L. Korsmo
President & CEO
Wine & Spirits Wholesalers of America



Robert M. Tobiassen
President
National Association of Beverage Importers



Alison Leavitt
Managing Director
Wine and Spirits Shippers Association

CC: Acting Department of Homeland Security Secretary Chad F. Wolf
Department of Treasury Deputy Assistant Secretary Timothy Skud