



January 26, 2021

Hon. Micah Caskey, Chair  
General Laws Subcommittee  
House Judiciary Committee  
South Carolina House of Representatives  
P.O. Box 11867  
Columbia, S.C. 29211

Dear Representative Caskey:

These comments are submitted on behalf of the Distilled Spirits Council of the United States, a national trade association representing producers and marketers of distilled spirits and importers of wines sold in the USA. We welcome the opportunity to provide our views regarding H. 3013 regarding a change to South Carolina statutes that would allow local communities to authorize the sale of spirits on Sundays under certain circumstances.

Across the country, states have modernized their marketplace regarding alcohol sales laws and since 2002 twenty-one states have passed laws permitting Sunday sales year-round including Connecticut, Georgia, Indiana Oregon, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Minnesota, Kentucky, Ohio, Idaho, Kansas, Washington, Virginia, New York, Rhode Island, and Massachusetts. Most recently, the state of West Virginia approved statewide Sunday Sales in 2019. The attached map, maintained by the Distilled Spirits Council, graphically indicates the states that allow for the sale of spirits on Sunday.

H. 3013 would allow local counties and municipalities to let their citizens decide at the ballot box if sales of distilled spirits should be allowed on Sundays. Please consider the following some key points regarding this proposal:

- Sunday is the second busiest shopping day of the week for the majority of families. These families do most of their shopping on the weekend and allowing the sale of spirits, beer and wine on Sunday gives adult consumers more choices and added convenience. Shoppers also tend to spend as much as 21% more on Sunday than any other day of the week.
- The State of South Carolina would benefit from Sunday sales as well. This change would translate into significant new state revenues from distilled spirits as well as an increase in sales for retailers. Historic data has proven that the change would develop new sales and not merely spread current sales out over more days.
- Implementation of Sunday Sales in all the above cited states gave an immediate boost to state tax revenues. For example, Pennsylvania's sales went up 10 percent since Sunday sales have gone into effect and the former chairman of the Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board called Sunday sales a "grand slam homerun" and reported that Sunday sales did not detract from sales on other days. Oregon sales increased between 9.2 and 19.6 percent and Delaware saw 7 and 10% increases in sales respectively.

Our assumptions are based on reported data, not anecdotal information. We believe that those counties or communities that might approve Sunday sales by referendum would lead to increased revenues for both the state and local treasuries.

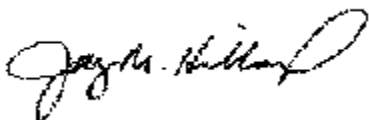
It is also important to note that if a community voted to allow the sale of alcohol on Sunday, no store would be required to open on Sunday; it simply gives them the right and flexibility to decide whether to open thus giving store owners the ability to decide for themselves rather than government deciding for them.

For those that may be concerned that additional off-premise Sunday sales may increase underage purchases or drunken driving the data does not support that argument. According to an analysis using U. S. Department of Transportation data on alcohol-related fatalities, there is no statistical difference in states that allow Sunday liquor sales compared to those that do not. Further, the law clearly states that if you are under twenty-one you cannot purchase alcohol. Certainly, the laws that pertain to beverage alcohol purchases remain the same whether alcohol is purchased on a Tuesday, Wednesday or Sunday. Alcohol is already available for sale on Sundays at restaurants and bars and beer and wine are allowed to be sold on Sunday, as well. Permitting package stores to open under certain circumstances after local ballot box decisions simply gives adult consumers more convenience that fit the modern lifestyle and accommodates tourists and visitors to South Carolina.

We urge the Committee to positively recommend the changes contemplated by H. 3013 and allow the citizens of South Carolina to decide for themselves if they should have the added choice and convenience they deserve and that this statutory change would provide.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Jay M. Hibbard  
Senior Vice President State Public Policy

Enc: Map of Allowed USA Spirits Sunday Sales

cc: Representative William Bailey  
Representative Patricia Henegan  
Representative Neal Collins

Representative Chris Murphy, Chairman  
South Carolina House Judiciary Committee