



May 2, 2023

The Honorable Greg Gianforte
Governor
P.O. Box 200801
Helena, MT 59620-0801

Governor Gianforte:

On behalf of the Distilled Spirits Council of the United States, a national trade association representing producers and marketers of distilled spirits sold in the United States, I write to you to express our support for HB 867 and to respectfully ask you to sign the bill into law. The bill would allow agency liquor stores in Montana to sell spirits seven days per week, subject to local ordinances.

Across the country, states have modernized their marketplace regarding alcohol sales laws, and since 2002, 21 states have passed laws permitting Sunday sales year-round, including a number of other control states. Montana is one of seven states that still prohibits sales of distilled spirits on Sundays.

We note the following points that support allowing agency liquor stores to sell distilled spirits seven days per week:

- 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 on Sunday gives adult consumers more choices and added convenience. Shoppers also tend to spend as much as 21 percent more on Sunday than any other day of the week.
- The State of Montana 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 agency liquor stores. 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 gives an immediate boost to state tax revenues. For example, Pennsylvania's sales went up 10 percent after Sunday sales went 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.

Our assumptions are based on reported data, not anecdotal information.

It is also important to note that no store would be required to open seven days per week. The language of the bill expressly states that “a store may be open or closed at the store's discretion.”

We respectfully ask you to approve House Bill 867 in support of Montana consumers, local businesses, and state revenues.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'AD', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Andy Deloney
Senior Vice President and Head State Public Policy