



DISTILLED SPIRITS COUNCIL
OF THE UNITED STATES



March 27, 2024

Honorable Luke A. Rankin, Chair
Senate Judiciary Committee
South Carolina Senate

Dear Members of the Senate Judiciary Committee:

On behalf of the South Carolina Distillers Guild and the Distilled Spirits Council of the United States, we write to you to express our support for HB 4231 and SB 492 and to respectfully ask you to favorably pass these bills out of committee. The bills would allow local communities to authorize the sale of spirits on Sundays through local option elections.

Across the country, states have modernized their marketplace regarding alcohol sales laws, and since 2002, 22 states have passed laws permitting Sunday sales year-round. South Carolina is one of just six states that still prohibits sales of distilled spirits on Sundays.

HB 4231 and SB 492 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:

- While distillers can be open on Sundays, they are unable to sell their products to consumers. Many craft distillers in South Carolina make the decision to close on Sundays because it's not fiscally sound to keep the doors open. For those that decide to stay open, disappointed consumers are forced to go home empty handed when visiting on Sundays without realizing they were prohibited from buying a bottle on that day.
- 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% more on Sunday.
- The state of South Carolina would benefit from seven-day sales. This change would translate into significant new state revenues from distilled spirits as well as an increase in sales for agency liquor stores and distilleries. Historic data has proven that the change would develop new sales and not merely spread current sales out over more days.
- Sunday sales gives an immediate boost to state tax revenues. For example, Pennsylvania's sales went up 10% 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%.

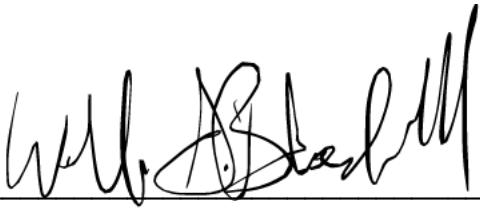
Our assumptions are based on reported data, not anecdotal information. We believe that those counties or communities that might approve Sunday sales by referendum would lead to increased revenues for both the state and local treasuries.

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

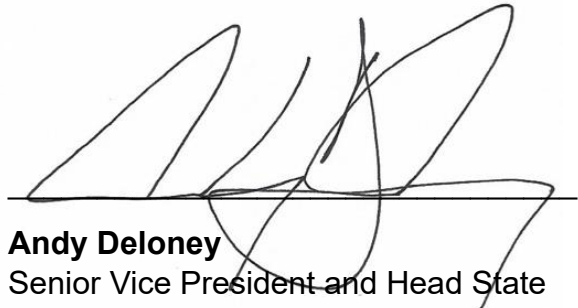
Alcohol is already available for sale on Sundays at restaurants and bars, and beer and wine are allowed to be sold on Sunday, as well. Permitting package stores and distilleries to sell distilled spirits on Sundays after local ballot box decisions simply gives adult consumers more convenience and accommodates tourists and visitors to South Carolina.

We urge the committee to positively recommend HB 4231 and SB 492 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.

Sincerely,



Scott Blackwell
President
South Carolina Craft Distillers Guild



Andy Deloney
Senior Vice President and Head State
Public Policy
Distilled Spirits Council of the U.S.