

<< 0040758 >>

Lindsay Blankenship
215 E Street SE
Washington DC 20003

August 12, 2003

Attn: TTB Notice No. 4
Chief, Regulations and Procedures Division
Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau
PO Box 50221
Washington, D.C. 20091-0221

Dear Sir or Madam:

The word "beer" conjures a specific and unique image in the minds of consumers. As a beer drinker, I support the proposed rule issued in March 2003 by the Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB) that outlines the alcohol content requirements in order for flavored malt beverages (FMB) to be classified as beer.

Specifically, the TTB proposes that for an FMB to be classified as beer, its alcohol content from distilled alcohol cannot exceed 0.5%. Beer is not distilled spirits, wine nor any other product that has been made through the distillation process. Beer is made through the brewing process. Equating beer and beverages that derive a majority of their alcohol content from distilled spirits could weaken the important distinctions between beer and products with higher alcohol content. These distinctions impact state and federal policies regarding the regulation and taxation of beer and other alcohol beverages.

Family owned and operated American entrepreneurs have brewed, distributed and sold beer for generations. George Washington's own handwritten recipe for beer can be found in the New York Public Library. Beer has a historical place in our nation's history and is regulated and taxed differently as a result.

The TTB final approval to the proposed 0.5% standard on FMBs would ensure the integrity of beer and the brewing process as well as protect the interests of those who enjoy responsibly consuming America's beverage - beer!

Sincerely,