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HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
SETH HAMMETT 11 SOUTH UNION STREET
Speaker MONTGOMERY, ALABAMA 36130
334-242-7668

August 14, 2003

Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau
Mr. Arthur Libertucci, Administrator
P.O. Box 50221
Washington, D.C. 20091-0221

SUBJECT:NOTICE 4
Dear Mr. Libertucci:

As Speaker of the House I am writing to express my support for the United States Treasury Department Division of Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau's (TTB) proposed rulemaking for flavored malt beverages (2001R-136P).

I strongly believe that the TTB 's proposed action is a much-needed clarification of the federal alcohol beverage categories which have been established to maintain an orderly marketplace in our country. Additionally, the debate associated with the stability of the standard provides for an important opportunity for the discussion of the stability of the retail licensing system and the overall marketplace. If the proposed rule is adopted, the standard will maintain an orderly marketplace, meet consumer expectations for consistent products, and help sustain the long-term development of the product category. Furthermore, these reformulated products will be consistent with state tax, license, and distribution laws allowing wholesalers and retailers to continue to distribute, sell and market malt beverages as they do today.

Finally, while there are some who have concerns regarding the ability of manufacturers to produce flavored malt beverage products in accordance with the new proposal, brewers have already demonstrated the expertise and technical ability necessary to brew these products under the new federal standard. The flavored malt beverage products that look and taste the same will be available to wholesalers and retailers in all states with no interruption and no discernable taste differences for consumers.

Thank you for this opportunity to share my viewpoint on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Seth Hammett