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Blue  
Ridge  
Beverage

August 13, 2003

Attn: TTB Notice No.4  
Chief, Regulation and Procedure Division  
Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau  
P.O. Box 50221  
Washington, DC 20091-0221

Dear Sir or Madam:

I am writing on behalf of Blue Ridge Beverage Co., South Boston, VA, to communicate my support of the proposed rule issued in March 2003 by the Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB) that defines the alcohol content for flavored malt beverages (FMB) to remain classified as beer. This rule proposes that FMBs contain an alcohol content of up to 0.5% from distilled alcohol in order for it to remain a beer. This is consistent with the historical definition of what constitutes beer and other malt beverages.

We feel that it is imperative that there be a clear distinction between beer and Beverages that obtain the majority of their alcohol from distilled spirits in order to clearly define the differences between these two products. These distinctions impact on state and federal policies regarding regulation and taxation. Beer is a unique product produced through a brewing process, unlike distilled spirits and fortified wine. The 0.5% standard will ensure that the integrity of beer remains.

As stated, Blue Ridge Beverage Co. supports the TTB approving the proposed 0.5% standard on FMBs.  
Sincerely,

Evelyn A. Hunt  
General Manager

BLUE RIDGE BEVERAGE COMPANY, INC., RO. BOX 1216, SOUTH BOSTON, VIRGINIA 24592 (434) 572-1988 FAX (434) 575-0572