

<< 0041987 >>

House of Representatives
District Office
Capitol Office Westbury Square Professional Building
Post Office Box 2910 Houston Texas 77035
Austin, Texas 78768-2910 5322 W. Bellfort, Suite 104
512.463.0744 713.885,0102
RON WILSON
State Representative District 131

September 15, 2003

Chief, Regulations and Procedures Division
Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau
P.O. Box 50221
Washington, DC 20091-022 1

Atm: Notice 4
Dear Sir or Madam:

As the Chairman of the Texas House Ways and Means Committee, I am writing to express my support for the U.S. Treasury's Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau proposed rulemaking for flavored malt beverages. (2001R-136P) I believe the TTB's action is an important clarification of federal alcoholic beverage categories established to maintain an orderly US marketplace. Further, I believe the debate surrounding the proposed standard poses important issues for the stability of the retail licensing system and the overall marketplace.

With my support for the 0.5% standard, I am joining The Beer Institute, the National Beer Wholesalers Association, and major small brewer associations, among many others, because this standard is the most efficient means to address recent concerns by both federal and state officials. If adopted, the standard will maintain an orderly marketplace, meet consumer expectations for consistent products, and help maintain the long-term development of the product category. In addition, these reformulated products will be consistent with state tax, license, and distribution laws allowing wholesalers and retailers to continue to distribute, sell and market flavored malt beverages as they do today.

However, absent a national standard rooted in existing law and regulation, manufacturers, retailers, and wholesalers will face a potential for a patchwork of individual state laws and regulations where the same product may be ultimately sold as "beer" in one state and as a "distilled spirits" in another.

Thank you for this opportunity for me to offer my support for the current TTB proposed rulemaking for flavored malt beverages.

Sincerely,

Chairman Ron Wilson