

<< 0044514 >>

STATE OF ILLINOIS  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

DISTRICT OFFICE                      SPRINGFIELD OFFICE  
1408 JOLIET ROAD, SUITE 102 217-N STRATTON BUILDING  
ROMEDEVILLE, ILLINOIS 60446      SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS 62706  
630/739-7063                              217/782-4179

BRENT HASSERT  
DEPUTY REPUBLICAN LEADER

October 20, 2003

Chief, Regulations & Procedures Division  
Attention: Notice No. 4  
Alcohol & Tobacco Tax & Trade Bureau  
P.O. Box 50221  
Washington, DC 20091

Dear Chief,

I writing in support of the 5 1/49 "majority" standard for flavored malt beverages (FMBs), which I understand Tobacco Tax & Trade Bureau says is supported by the law:

- It will promote fairness. The federal government has for two decades allowed the use of flavors containiing alcohol in beers and FMBs fewer than 6% alcohol by the volume without limitation. An entire category of malt beverages with varying taste and flavor types has been developed in reliance on that and should not be harmed now by new federal regulations.
- It will ensure the continued availability of today's most popular FMB products. FMBs like Smimoff Ice, Mike's Hard Lemonade and Seagrams' Coolers belong on retail shelves in the beer section. Establishing the dire 90-10 (0.5%) standard would force FMB brewers to make costly changes to their production process that some companies may not be able to accomplish.
- It will allow brewers to continue to satisfy consumers. According to national reporting services, the FMB category has achieved remarkable acceptance among consumers who want a bottled ready to drink beverage with the same alcohol content as beer, but do not prefer the taste of conventional beers. The category's share of grocery channel sales last summer was nearly 6% of the total beer category.
- It will ensure that tomorrow's FMB products continue to taste like the products consumers enjoy today. The use of significant amounts, of flavor in a FMB allows those products to achieve the refreshing taste many consumers want. A 90-10 rule would force FMB brewers to substantially increase the amount of

RECYCLED PAPER - SOYBEAN INKS

<< 0044514A >>

malted barley and other traditional ingredients used in an FMB, probably resulting in a very different tasting product.

I appreciate you letting me take your time to share with you my support for the 5 1/49 "majority" standard for FMBs. If you have any other questions or comment, please call my office at 630-739-7063 or e-mail me at [hassert85@I.com](mailto:hassert85@I.com) Thank you.

Sincerely,

BRENT HASSERT  
Deputy Republican Leader  
State Representative, 85th District