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BROWNN DISTRIBUTING Fax:8042624184 Sep 29 2003 15:36 P.02

September 29,2003

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

Brown Distributing Company supports the proposed rule recently issued in March 2003 by the Tax and Trade Bureau that outlines the necessary alcohol content requirements in order for Flavored Malt Beverages (FMB) to be classified as beer. The proposed standard requires an FMB to be classified as beer if its alcohol content derived from distilled alcohol would not exceed 0.5%.

Beer is a unique type of alcohol that has been regulated and taxed differently than other alcohol beverages throughout our nation's history. The proposed rule is consistent with the historical interpretation of what constitutes beer and other malt beverages. Such policy consistency is important because while states enjoy regulatory power over alcohol, most follow federal regulatory guidelines. The proposed rule by the Tax and Trade Bureau would help maintain an orderly marketplace, thus avoiding costly and confusing disruptions in state licensing, taxation and distribution policies, any of which would deal a severe blow to beer wholesalers.

Moreover, equating beer and beverages deriving a majority of their alcohol content from distilled spirits could weaken the important distinctions between beer and products with a higher alcohol content. These distinctions impact state and federal policies regarding the regulation and taxation of beer and other alcohol beverages. If these distinctions disappear, it will only be a matter of time before other producers of alcohol beverages attempt to categorize themselves as beer products.

Once again, Brown Distributing Company encourages the TTB to give a final approval to the proposed "0.5% standard" on FMB's.

Sincerely,

Gary Stumpf
V.P./General Manager
Brown Distributing Company, Inc.

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