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Tuesday, September 16, 2003

Chief
Regulations and Procedures Divisions
Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau
PO Box 50221
Washington, D.C. 20091-0221

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing to you as a concerned consumer and as an employee of United States Beverage. The proposed rule change concerning Flavored Malternative Beverages would be devastating to the industry. It would put small companies out of business which would result in unemployment and major beer companies such as Anheiser Busch monopolizing the industry.

Forcing companies to either re-license their product as a spirit (which would require paying a tax), or change the formula is senseless. Having to pay a tax on FMB's would result in an increase of price for the consumer and changing the formula would change the taste of the beverage. It would be certain that retailers would loose valuable customers.

While I understand the issues surrounding this controversy, I have yet to see sufficient evidence as to why this is a necessary change. For 30 years the regulations governing the FMB's have been effectively working, and do not warrant a change. At this point in the game drastic change would be detrimental to the FMB companies.

I am writing in favor of maintaining the status quo or adopting the 51-49 standard. I hope that you will consider my view points when making your final decision.

Thanks for your time,

Kylie Stephens