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Support of TTB Notice #4From: Natalie Abernethy [natalie@allaboutbeer.com]

Sent: Monday, October 20, 2003 9:04 AM

To: nprm@ttb.gov

Subject: Support of TTB Notice #4

Importance: High

October 20, 2003 Chief, Regulations and Procedures Division Tax and Trade Bureau  
PO Box 50221 Washington, D.C. 20031-0221 RE: TTB Notice #4 Dear Sir or Madam: I  
am writing in support of the proposed standard of composition for Flavored Malt  
Beverages ("FMB's"), as set forth by the Tax and Trade Bureau ("TTB") in TTB  
Notice No. 4 of March 2003. This proposal is important for beer consumers as it  
clearly delineates the difference between beer and other alcohol beverages.

The United States has, in the past  
quarter of a century, experienced a revival in the brewing industry, from a low  
of 41 breweries to today's high of more than 1,400 breweries. The revival is  
predicated on renewed commitment to traditional processes and beer styles. Beer  
lovers, such as myself, have been treated to a surfeit of flavors and brands  
that cannot be found in any other country. By focusing on the unique qualities  
of malt beverages, we are also encouraging respect for the brewing art and an  
appreciation of the special place of beer in our culture. This outlook fosters  
moderate and responsible consumption, a critical public policy goal.

I feel that this  
proposed rule as a critical step towards consistent classification of alcoholic  
beverages. Maintaining an orderly marketplace is an important concern for beer  
lovers. Your proposed rule will likely help to maintain clear and distinct  
definitions that will guarantee consistent policies for each alcohol category.  
This will help ensure the maintenance of the rich diversity of offerings unique  
to the United States.

Furthermore, any alternative to the TTB proposal will likely trigger disruptive  
state legislative and regulatory actions. These measures could have significant  
ramifications for the more than 1,400 small breweries and for thousands of  
alcohol beverage licensees, most of which are also small businesses. The  
limitations on diversity and availability would be devastating for beer lovers.

I affirm my support for the  
proposed "0.5% standard" for FMBs. Its consistency with historical  
interpretations of federal regulations will help maintain the integrity of the  
beer category, and keep the United States the best place in the world to enjoy  
quality beer.

Sincerely,

Circulation Manager  
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