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May 14, 2003

Ramesh Patel
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Mart, TX 76664-1034

RE: TTB NOTICE NUMBER FOUR

Chief
Regulations and Procedures Division
Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau P.O.
Box 5022 I
Washington, D.C. 20091-0221

To Whom It May Concern:

After years of successful sales it was time for the government to catch up with flavored malt beverages and try and squeeze more taxes out of it. That is clearly the thought behind the new rules in Notice Number 4 issued by the Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB). It is also why I am so adamantly opposed to these new rules and any further regulation or change to the flavored malt beverage industry.

As a retailer who relies on sales of flavored malt beverages, I am upset that the TTB would attempt to reclassify these drinks and squeeze more taxes out of them. Not only does this policy harm everyday consumers, but it also harms retail stores like mine where these products will no longer be able to be sold. This is all assuming that the flavored malt beverage industry even finds it profitable to make such products after the new taxes are slapped on.

The end result is that retail businesses are deprived of crucial revenue, flavored malt beverage companies are fighting to maintain a profit and the TTB may lose out on crucial excise tax dollars in the long run. It's obvious that these rules were not well thought out and must be changed. I urge you to re-examine the priorities of these rules and vote no.

Sincerely Yours,

Ramesh Patel