



March 5, 2010

Honorable David Patterson, Governor
State of New York - Executive Chamber
State Capitol
Albany, NY 12224

Dear Governor Patterson:

I am writing to inform you that the Board of Directors of the Dutchess County Regional Chamber of Commerce has taken action to oppose the proposal to allow the sale of wine in grocery stores and all outlets where beer is presently sold.

While we value the role that grocery stores play in our community, we are concerned that this proposal will lead to 1,000 small businesses closing their doors and the loss of 4,500 jobs, statewide. These small businesses play a vital role in our neighborhoods by sponsoring community events and donating to local charities in addition to providing jobs for many people. Frankly, we see the proposal eliminating jobs and not creating new jobs since it will only require existing grocery store employees to stack store shelves with a different product.

In addition, we have heard from several small wineries in the Hudson River Valley that produce some of the finest wines that New York State and the nation have to offer. In their view, this proposal will hurt them by eliminating the small businesses that support their products. While this may seem counterintuitive, they believe grocery stores will have only limited shelf space available for wine sales and therefore, from a business point of view will only feature the most well-known brands. As I am sure you know, the wineries in our Hudson River Valley and our state play an important part in our economy and we cannot support a proposal that puts even one winery at risk.

We also believe that the adding of wine in 19,000 new outlets in New York State will inevitably increase teenagers' access to alcohol raising incidences of underage drinking and drunk driving. Our state already spends \$3.2 billion annually to cope with the negative effects of underage drinking. If this proposal is passed, we believe that these costs will skyrocket.

We welcome all businesses, large and small, here in the Hudson River Valley. This proposal would hurt small businesses that are vital to our economy and our community. As a result, we must oppose this proposal and ask that you reject any efforts to legalize the sale of wine in 19,000 new outlets. Expanding the sale of wine to new outlets will do little to aid the state's budget and could come at a great economic and human cost. I trust there will be many opportunities in the future when we can work together for the betterment of the economy in New York.

Sincerely,

Charles S. North
President and CEO

Cc: Senator Stephen Saland
Senator Vincent Leibell
Assemblyman Joel Miller
Assemblyman Marcus Molinaro
Assemblyman Frank K. Skartados
Margaret Moree, Director of Federal Affairs, The Business Council of New York State Inc.