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**UFCW LOCAL 1500 JOINS FIGHT AGAINST
DANGEROUS PLAN TO EXPAND WINE SALES
*Says Proposal Would Kill Jobs, Not Create Jobs***

NEW YORK, NY February 1, 2010 – UFCW Local 1500, the largest union representing grocery store workers, today announced they have joined forces with the Last Store on Main Street Coalition to fight Governor Paterson’s ill-conceived plan to legalize the sale of wine wherever beer is now sold.

Just last week Local 1500 president Bruce Both sent a letter to the Governor blasting his dangerous plan that would not create a single job at a grocery store, but cost more than 4,500 jobs as wine and liquor stores close, as well as put at risk hundreds of union jobs for those who sell and deliver to those stores.

In his letter, Both said, “Any jobs that proponents of the proposal suggest that may be created in the Supermarkets will be minimal. Our Union strongly doubts any jobs will be created if this proposal is implemented and we have seen no hard data to suggest otherwise.”

UFCW Local 1500 is the largest grocery workers union in the state, with 23,000 members located in the five boroughs, Long Island, Westchester, Putnam and Dutchess Counties. The union rejects Paterson’s claim that jobs will be created if wine is sold in grocery stores. In fact, there is no evidence to support this claim, and good jobs will be lost as the Big Box stores use their own purchasing and delivery networks to buy and deliver wine into their stores.

UFCW Local 1500 has joined with the RWDSU, Teamsters Joint Council 16, and UFCW Local 2D in opposing the Governor’s misguided plan to legalize wine sales in every deli, corner store, gas station, bodega and grocery store in New York.

“We appreciate the support from UFCW Local 1500, and share their concern that this plan will hurt working families all across New York just so Wegmans and Walmart can take even more profits out of New York State,” said Jeff Saunders, president of the Retailers Alliance and founder of the Last Store on Main Street Coalition. “In these difficult times, I can’t imagine how the Legislature can intentionally put people out of work by passing this job-killing proposal.”

While this idea has been promoted for years in Albany by grocery stores and their lobbyists, it has never passed. In fact, no state in more than 28 years has approved legislation legalizing the sale of wine in grocery stores, with Kentucky, Tennessee and Colorado joining New York in the last year in rejecting efforts by Big Box stores to take over this business.

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In a cynical attempt to soften his proposal, Governor Paterson has adopted the phony compromise plan pushed by Big Box stores that would allow wine stores to sell potato chips and other items. Big Box lobbyists falsely claim this lame idea would offset the loss of wine sales.

“I would also raise a concern we should all have about this proposal. Allowing irresponsible companies like Walmart to sell wine is, at best, questionable and, at worst, irresponsible. Walmart has a long history of violating the laws of the States where they are located,” said Both. “The laws violated by Walmart include, but are not limited to, wage and hour, environmental, workers rights and discrimination. The only difference in this case is that if Walmart continues its lax approach to abiding by the law, underage drinkers will have greater access to alcohol and therefore increasing the incidents of drinking and driving.”

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