



WISCONSIN LEGISLATURE

P.O. BOX 8952 · MADISON, WI 53708

TO: Assembly Committee on State Affairs and Government Operations
FROM: Representative Keith Ripp and Senator Luther Olsen
DATE: Wednesday, February 5th, 2014
SUBJECT: Testimony in favor of Assembly Bill 600 (Senate Bill 453)

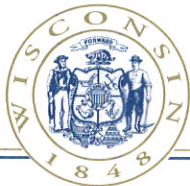
Thank you Chairman Weininger and Committee members for holding a hearing on Assembly Bill 600. We appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony and discuss this bipartisan legislation which adds wineries to the list of acceptable furnishers of taste samples at Trade Shows.

In the private sector, one of the most direct ways to increase prospective business in the food and alcohol industry is by offering samples at Trade Shows. Under current law, a manufacturer, rectifier, or wholesaler of intoxicating liquor may furnish taste samples- free of charge. However, wineries are not listed as an acceptable furnisher. Winemakers may attend Trade Shows to give presentations, but cannot furnish samples, which constrains winery expansion. This unnecessary red tape hinders the type of exposure or promotion that is done at trade shows.

Furthermore, Wisconsin Statute 125.33(2)(o) allows brewers to furnish taste samples at Trade Shows. This bill is a common sense fix that would align wineries with breweries in regards to taste samples at trade shows.

During this hearing, you will hear testimony from Wisconsin Winery owners that have firsthand knowledge of the importance of this legislation and can answer any practical questions you may have.

Once again, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony and speak in favor of Assembly Bill 600.



State Senator Sheila Harsdorf

Date: February 5, 2014
To: Assembly Committee on State Affairs and Government Operations
Fr: Senator Sheila Harsdorf
Re: Assembly Bill 600—Wine Taste Samples Offered at Trade Shows

Dear Chair Weininger and Committee Members,

Thank you for holding a public hearing on Assembly Bill 600 (AB 600), which would allow winemakers to offer taste samples at trade association events. I regret that I am unable to testify in person due to another committee meeting.

Currently, Wisconsin law allows a manufacturer, rectifier, or wholesaler of intoxicating liquor to offer taste samples, free of charge, at trade shows, conferences, conventions, or other business meetings held on the premises by a trade association of “Class B” retailers. However, winemakers are prohibited from doing the same. Winemakers are allowed to attend trade shows, but are disadvantaged by not being able to offer taste samples of their products.

Trade shows allow wineries to showcase and promote their products and being able to offer taste samples is an important component of marketing their products. I believe AB 600 is a simple, common-sense change that will help the growing wine industry by allowing winemakers to better market their products by offering taste samples at trade association events.

I urge your support for this legislation and thank you for allowing me to submit testimony in support of AB 600. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions.