



Statement from Metropolitan Package Store Association, New York State Liquor Store Association and Retailers Alliance

No to Wine in Grocery Stores in the FY2027 NYS Budget

On behalf of the Metropolitan Package Store Association, New York State Liquor Store Association, and Retailers Alliance we strongly urge the Legislature to reject the large corporate push to include wine in grocery store (WIGS) language in the FY2027 Budget.

Contrary to the claims of large corporations and national grocery chains, WIGS will not generate extra sales tax revenue for the state. Consumers won't spend more on wine; they'll just transfer their purchases from liquor stores to grocery stores. Additionally, the revenue from one-time supermarket wine licensing fees won't be sufficient to counterbalance the clear loss in tax revenue and other economic benefits from liquor stores closing down.

Our three associations collectively represent over 3,500 locally owned and operated liquor stores across New York State. Recently, small businesses have faced a well-funded, coordinated attack from large corporations; major grocery chains are leveraging economic power to fund op-eds, digital ads, and polls, framing wine in grocery stores as merely a matter of consumer convenience.

Their commissioned poll claims that over 70% of the public supports the sale of wine in grocery stores. However, the poll fails to ask whether the public understands the harm this proposal would cause local liquor stores, or if they would still be in favor of the proposal if it could lead to their local liquor store closing.

Our members and their families live and breathe wine and spirits. We continuously educate ourselves, engage with our suppliers and producers, and most importantly, ensure this highly regulated product stays out of the hands of minors. To grocers, wine is just another product—no different from candy, packaged foods, or plastic wrap.

For most of our stores, wine accounts for over 55% of sales and produces a higher profit margin than spirits. This proposed legislation would hand our best-selling, most profitable product to large corporations, cutting into our sales and threatening our ability to stay profitable.

Colorado recently passed similar legislation, and the impact on liquor stores has been swift and unrelenting. We have closely followed the developments and spoken with industry colleagues there, who report a dramatic decrease in sales and profits. An estimated 100 stores have already closed, with another 200-400 stores at risk.

When discussing WIGS with legislators, we frequently hear comparisons to Florida, where wine sales in grocery stores exist. The key difference is that Florida's ABC laws established an economic model where grocers have always sold wine, allowing liquor store owners to plan accordingly. In New York, liquor stores have operated under a different model, shaping decisions about product selection, store location, and size. Many owners have strategically located their stores in plazas next to grocery stores—these stores will be the first to close if WIGS becomes law.

We also want to emphasize that, nationwide, wine and liquor sales are already experiencing a significant downturn at every level of the three-tier system. Retailers, wholesalers, and manufacturers are all reporting reduced volume and shrinking revenues. In response, wine and spirits companies are cutting entire divisions, laying off long-time employees, consolidating operations, and in some cases closing their doors altogether.

This is not a time of growth or stability for our sector; it is a period of contraction and heightened financial risk. Introducing major structural changes into an industry that is already under this kind of pressure will not spur healthy competition—it will accelerate closures and job losses. Our industry cannot withstand further major disruptions and still remain viable in an already unstable, declining market.

For the foregoing reasons we ask that you support locally owned small businesses—often the last remaining shops on main street—and reject WIGS.

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