



Dear Members of the General Assembly:

On behalf of the the undersigned regulated industries, we respectfully ask you to reject Governor's amendments #157, #158, #190 and #191 to House Bill 30.

In 2015 the General Assembly adopted legislation that began the transformation of ABC from a state agency into an independent authority. It was a comprehensive bill that overhauled ABC operations and created the Authority as it exists today. The goal at the time was to minimize political influence over this important revenue generating venture, so that it could operate in a more efficient and businesslike manner. Appropriate oversight and accountability were maintained with the Governor retaining the power to appoint the ABC CEO and Board of Directors, with confirmation by the General Assembly. The 2015 legislation was developed in a thoughtful and deliberative process including all ABC stakeholders.

In this past session, language included in House Bill 30 would have continued the intent of that original legislation and situated ABC in the budget like the Virginia Lottery, a similar independent, revenue generating authority. Recent events related to the Authority's revenue forecast have reinforced our concern that ABC needs independence from political influence. Because of this, we ask that you reject the aforementioned amendments. Please feel free to let us know if you have any questions or would like to discuss further.

Sincerely,

Distilled Spirits Council of the United States

Virginia Beer Wholesalers Association

Virginia Distillers Association

Virginia Wineries Association