

STATE LEGISLATURE SAYS NO TO WINE IN GROCERY STORES

Senate, Assembly Save Thousands of Small Businesses, Jobs Across New York State

Last Store on Main Street

August 4th

The Last Store on Main Street Coalition- an alliance that includes small business owners and advocates, wineries and union members today applauded the State Legislature for approving a 2010-11 budget that rejects Governor Paterson's bad idea to allow wine sales in every grocery store, gas station, corner store, deli and bodega across the state.

Paterson's plan would have put 4,500 New Yorkers out of work by closing more than 1,000 small businesses across the state, while at the same time further proliferating underage drinking.

More than 100 New York State wineries opposed the proposal, along with Law Enforcement Against Drunk Driving and a host of unions.

"We beat the Big Box stores and all their money once again but making the case on the merits, proving for the second straight year that Mom and Pop stores can still get a fair hearing from Albany," Jeff Saunders, president of the Retailers Alliance and founder of the Last Store Coalition. "We thank Speaker Silver, Senate Democratic Leader John Sampson, Senate Republican Leader Dean Skelos and Assembly Republican Leader Brian Kolb and the entire Legislature for their bipartisan opposition to this job-killing idea."

Stefan Kalogridis, president of the New York State Liquor Store Association and a coalition leader, said, "The Legislature saw through the false promises of this bad idea, from the phony revenue projections to the phony job projections, and made the right decision. This was nothing more than money grab by Danny Wegman and his Big Box buddies, and fortunately for thousands of families across the State, the Legislature recognized their greed and said no."

Michael Correra, president of the Metropolitan Package Store Association and a coalition leader, said, "The Legislature recognized that this terrible idea to would allow Big Box stores to crush our stores just like they did to the butcher, the baker, florists, hardware stores and independent pharmacists. This is a victory for small businesses, the backbone of our economy and communities across the State. We thank the Legislature for standing up for small businesses."

Will Ouweleen, owner of Eagle Crest Vineyards in the Finger Lakes, said, ""As a small producer of Finger Lakes wines, we are grateful the Legislature heard our concerns.

Defeating WIGS affirms the rights of small businesses and wineries throughout New

York State. Now we must begin the real work to better celebrate and sell the great wines of NYS."

Mike Elmendorf, New York State Director of the National Federation of Independent Business (NFIB), New York and the nation's leading small business advocacy association, said, "The defeat of the wine in grocery stores proposal is a major victory for small business owners. NFIB members opposed this measure by a two-to-one margin, and for good reason: It was not only a direct assault on small business, but also a totally unrealistic, one-shot fiscal gimmick that would have given both the budget and our economy a bad hangover. We thank our bi-partisan allies in the legislature who stood up for small business on this issue and helped us put a cork in this jobkiller, hopefully for good."

George Miranda, president of the Teamsters Joint Council 16, which represents 125,000 workers in New York, said, "This policy decision would have jeopardized hundreds of blue-collar jobs in the midst of the worst economy New York State has seen in generations -- and that makes no sense at all. The Teamsters are therefore extremely grateful for the support and good sense of the Legislature in rejecting this job-killing proposal, and hope we can put this fight behind us once and for all."

UFCW international Vice President, Region 1 Director Richard Whalen, said, ""The decision not to legalize the sale of wine in grocery stores is a victory for good jobs in our community, a victory for our children's well-being, and ultimately a victory for common sense. The hardworking spirits retailers and grocery store workers of New York were united in their opposition to this proposal and today can be proud that their collective voice influenced the debate, resulting in a positive outcome for the entire state."

RWDSU President Stuart Appelbaum said, "Wine in supermarkets is a bad idea for New York plain and simple. It's bad for our communities, bad for workers and bad for small businesses. Speaker Silver and Senate Democratic Conference Leader Sampson understood this and acted to protect the interests of all New Yorkers. We are proud to have stood with them and with all our brothers and sisters in the Distillery Workers and the UFCW in opposing this bad plan."

John Vacca, President of Teamsters Local 917, said, "We thank Speaker Silver, Senator Sampson, and their colleagues in the Legislature for their leadership in disapproving the sale of wine in grocery stores, saving the jobs of hundreds of Teamsters across the State. Despite tremendous pressure to approve this quick fix budget proposal, Albany recognized this policy's devastating implications and staunchly defended working New Yorkers."

RWDSU Local 338 President John Durso said, "Governor Paterson's ill-conceived plan to legalize wine in grocery stores would have cost hundreds of good union jobs while allowing Big Box stores like Wal-Mart to squeeze out more corporate profits. We applaud the Legislature for putting hard working New Yorkers first."

Frank DeRiso, President of UFCW Local One, said, "We applaud the Assembly and Senate for standing up against this proposal. This victory means 4,500 hard working New Yorkers will not be forced out of their jobs, 1,000 small family-owned retailers will not be eaten alive by the big boxed stores, and New York wineries will not be in danger of getting pushed aside by cheap imported wine."

George Orlando, President of UFCW Local 1D, said, "We are pleased to see the Legislature has stood up for small business because the local retailers are a critical link for our industry. Big Box stores would have destroyed that link, putting business owners and the union workers who supply them out of work. This is a victory for working families across New York."

Vincent Fyfe, President of United Food & Commercial Workers International (UFCW) Local 2-D, said, "I am extremely proud, and appreciative, of the incredible effort and unity demonstrated by our union brothers and sisters in this fight. I want to thank the United Food & Commercial Workers International Union, UFCW REGION 1, RWDSU, including RWDSU Local 338; UFCW Local 1500, UFCW Local 1. UFCW Local 342, UFCW Local 348-S, UFCW Local 888, UFCW Local 359, UFCW Local 1D and especially the Sisters & Brothers of UFCW Local 2D; Teamsters Local 917 and Teamsters Joint Council 16. This was a union victory, as much as a victory for the Last Store Coalition. The real winners are the thousands of working men and women whose families rely on this industry."