

## FOR POLICE, LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND LICENSING BOARDS

### PROTECT YOUR COMMUNITY FROM QUESTION 1

This fall, large foreign-owned grocery and convenience store chains will try to convince Massachusetts consumers to approve a ballot initiative that would increase the current number of liquor licenses in the state by almost 3,000, more than doubling the current number of outlets. All of this will be done in the name of “convenience.” When it comes to the safety of our families, friends and communities it is responsibility, not convenience that is most important. This is a dangerous initiative. Protect your community by voting no on 1.

#### Control and enforcement

- Not only grocery stores but convenience stores, drug stores and even some gas stations will be able to secure this new class of license
- National grocery and convenience store chains do **NOT have the incentive to police underage drinking.**
  - Wine sales only represent a small segment of their bottom line
  - They face no meaningful penalty if caught, violations will lead to the temporary closure of their wine sections, unlike package store owners whose livelihoods are jeopardized by the temporary store closure guaranteed by a violations
  - They are not integrated, conscientious members of the community
  - In other states, grocery stores fail to stop underage buyers **25 – 30%** of the time, almost double the rate of package stores

Increased availability/outlet density leads to **increases in alcohol-related abuses and incidents.**

- Greater numbers of alcohol-related injury
  - Strong associations between alcohol outlet density and violent crime
  - Greater numbers of alcoholism, cirrhosis and other alcohol-related diseases
  - Increased liquor law violations, increases in underage drinking
- These stores employ fifteen and sixteen year olds who will now have easy access to alcoholic beverages
  - More police personnel and time will be necessary to regulate the industry and deal with the increase in alcohol related problems causing significant budgetary problems.
  - The petition, as worded, mandates the creation of these licenses.
  - Many grocery stores now have self-checkout lanes. Situations have already occurred where violations have been committed. How will the sale of alcohol be controlled?
  - Independent package stores will lose sales of their highest profit item. Many will go out of business, not paying their annual renewal fee to operate. Cities and towns will lose these revenues, along with property taxes.

Local Boards and employees will NOT have the same influence over giant foreign and domestic companies that they do over local businesses.

# PROTECT YOUR CHILDREN

## SUPPORT LOCAL BUSINESSES

**A question has been put on the Massachusetts November ballot that will dramatically change the way liquor is sold in the State. Question 1 if passed would DOUBLE the liquor licenses in MA, with NO funding for increased enforcement.**

- Ahold, a foreign corporation headquartered in the Netherlands, which owns Stop & Shop is leading the charge to get the “wine in food stores” ballot question passed, along with other Food Stores. The question asks voters to allow over 2,800 new alcohol licenses to be issued by the state of Massachusetts. Initially these new licenses will be for wine only.
- The grocers will be spending millions of dollars talking about how “convenient” it will be to pick-up a bottle of wine with your groceries.
- What they won’t tell you is that should this bill pass, in addition to grocery stores, virtually **every convenience store, drug store and even some gas stations will be able to sell alcohol**. In fact, we’ve heard that one drug store chain has already prepared three hundred applications.
- One of the biggest risks to this proposed new system is underage drinking. The primary purpose behind Massachusetts’ package store system is to ensure that the sale of liquor to the underage is strictly controlled. There is strict enforcement and tight penalties. And package store owners are committed to working with local law enforcement and the ABCC to prevent the sale of alcohol to the underage.
- Many convenience stores and drug stores employ **fifteen and sixteen year olds**. They would have easy access to alcoholic beverages, and would be put in the position of having to refuse to sell (or provide) alcohol to their classmates.
- Kids do drink wine, especially if it is more readily available than beer. Sting operations done in other states show that grocery stores and convenience stores fail to stop underage buyers 25% to 30% of the time. This is almost double the rate of dedicated liquor stores.
- Oh, by the way, they also won’t tell you about the research that shows the effects of increasing the availability of alcohol. So here it is.... Research shows that when you increase the number of retail outlets selling alcohol there is a significant increase in **underage drinking, college binge drinking, crime and alcohol related car crashes**.
- There are no provisions made to increase the budget for enforcement of double the number of licenses. This burden would be placed on local law enforcement, and existing ABCC (Alcoholic Beverage Control Commission) staff, both already straining from underfunding. The **ONLY** financial benefit of the new system will be the profits that go to the supermarket and convenience store chains’ owners. .
- In addition, local businesses and their employees will be hurt. Many liquor stores will go out of business. The ones that survive will be forced to layoff employees. **We estimate that 3,000 to 4,000 Massachusetts residents will lose their jobs**.
- Maybe the current system isn’t perfect but for the most part it works. Please, when you go to the ballot box in November, protect your children and support the local businesses that have been supporting the community for so many years. **VOTE NO** to “wine in food stores”.