

**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMPILATION OF PUBLIC COMMENTS**

Submitted to the Committee on Licensing & Administrative Procedures
For HB 2349

Compiled on: Thursday, April 20, 2023 9:06 PM

Note: Comments received by the committee reflect only the view of the individual(s) submitting the comment, who retain sole responsibility for the content of the comment. Neither the committee nor the Texas House of Representatives takes a position on the views expressed in any comment. The committee compiles the comments received for informational purposes only and does not exercise any editorial control over comments.

Hearing Date: April 19, 2023 8:00 AM

William Rucker
Self - IT Manager
Conroe, TX

I support passage of this bill in the name of allowing permittees to sell direct to consumer.

Richard Marquez
Self
Conroe, TX

It would be great to be able to purchase 2 bottles of every bottle of alcohol produced by Bartlett's Distillery. Being allowed to purchase only 2 bottles of spirits is very inconvenient as we are usually looking to purchase for the holidays and have to start early to make sure we have all bottles purchase before Christmas.

Jordan Bennett
Self
Katy, TX

Please raise the limit of bottles that 1 person can buy of each spirit and do away with the 30 days. I also would like to be able to purchase on Sundays.

James Nicholas
Self - Drone Pilot
The Woodlands, TX

I frequently consume more than two bottles of liquor per month, whether it's through personal consumption, entertaining, or gift giving. One of my favorite rums is distilled locally to me, but I can only purchase two bottle per month per current law. I should be able to purchase as many bottles as I wish from a distiller. When the distiller is the primary source for an item, I should not be limited. I frequently have to go without as I give my two personal bottles away to friends and family and have to wait for the next month.

If the distiller is setup properly for retail business, why does it matter whether I purchase liquor from the distiller or retailer? I can buy as many bottles as I want from the retailer, but not the distiller and that does not make sense. The current law is limiting the distillery owner's ability to run a successful business and should be changed.

Jody Czajkoski, Mr
Commercial Real Estate investors
Conroe, TX

Please pass & help the small business owners that built Texas

Kurt Zimmerman
Kurt Zimmerman
Conroe, TX

Hello, It is time for the antiquated laws to be updated. Distilleries limited to two bottles a month is out of step with the current environment. (Breweries, for example, are able to sell significant quantities of their product to go now.) Expanding the ability of distilleries to offer products directly to consumers in a measured way will allow small operations to survive and thrive. Let's promote small business and pass HB 2349!

Karl Jacobson
self
Kingwood, TX

I strongly support this bill to change how many bottles distiller's can sell to the public when they visit their facilities. There are a lot of great small distilleries throughout the state, and a lot of their excellent product is NOT available at the big box liquor stores (Spec's, Total Wine, Twin Liquor, etc.). The current 2 bottle limit means that I have to make a trip to the distillery every 30 days to attempt to stock up on something I can't buy anywhere else, and keeps me from buying everything I would like to purchase when visiting a distillery that is hours from my house and also not available at my local liquor store. Great rum? Great Whisky? great Gin? Sorry, you can only buy two. The current limit is archaic; this bill is a good step at bringing Texas liquor laws into the 21st century. Hopefully allowing liquor sales on Sundays will be next....

Michael Bryant
SELF
The Woodlands, TX

I am sending this letter of support for Bill 2349. I would like the opportunity to buy direct 2 of each product offered by a distiller rather than only 2 total per 30 day period. It prevents me from buying the products that I wish to give to family, friends and business associates. Please support this bill.

Best regards,

Michael Bryant

David Warner
self, Vice President Stitt Spark Plug Company
Conroe, TX

Please pass this bill, it just makes sense...

Suzie Baker
Self
Shenandoah, TX

I support this bill and the local Texans who's businesses it would benefit.

Jeffrey Hamby

self

Conroe, TX

The limit on bottles purchased should be increased. Under the current law I'm unable to purchase items for myself and as gifts, and the law only serves to force me to drive more, waste fuel, and waste time.

Stacey Drab, Director of Sales

Burleson's Inc

CYPRESS, TX

I am in full support of increasing the bottle limit to 6 bottles per consumer

Maria Echeverry, VP of Operations

Gulf Coast Distillers

Houston, TX

I agree to double the number of bottles sold at distilleries to consumers from 2 bottles to 4 bottles.

James Gibbs, Exec. VP of Operations/Engineering

Dripping Springs Distilling

Dripping Springs, TX

This Bill enables visitors to distilleries to purchase more bottles. Many distilleries have products that can only be purchased there, and if customers wanted to buy several different types, this bill would increase it from 2 to 4 products. Tourism is the main reason we see multiple bottle purchase requests. By allowing this it supports the employment of personnel, widens the Texas branding and tourism for our state. Many of the products purchased are for gifts for tourists to give when they travel back home.

Cathy Rape

Self - occupation registered nurse

Conroe, TX

This would mean we could finally get a bottle for a friend and still have a few bottles for ourselves as well as a few extra for holiday presents and parties. Its inconvenient to make multiple trips to the retailer for these purposes.

Lori Popp, Mrs

self - Accountant

Hallettsville, TX

Please help to increase the number of bottle sales permitted at small distilleries in Texas.

Lee Hunt, Mr.

Self

Fort Worth, TX

I write in support of this bill. By increasing the number of bottles purchasable from a manufacture, you are allowing customers to find more variety. This will increase the chances of their finding a product they like from the distillery-- which they will then buy from liquor stores-- satisfying the distributors and retailers. Raising the bottle limit without raising the volume of liquid allowed would seem to be a sufficient compromise for all members of the three-tier system.

Chawn Harris

Self contractor

Houston, TX

Distribution of alcohol to consumers should be regulated so consumers will not leave an establishment unable to function accordingly to the law of operating a motor vehicle which clearly puts others and themselves lives in danger

Hearing Date: April 19, 2023 8:00 AM

Thomas M Wright
Wright's Fire & Safety
Conroe, TX

Pass

Michael-Jared Hunter Gillis
Self
Magnolia, TX

There is absolutely no reason for a government to limit the amount of anything that a citizen can legally purchase. All that the current limitations are doing is limiting the growth of small businesses in our state. By loosening the state government's noose on distillers, this will allow small businesses to grow much faster thus growing Texas along with them.

sharon corley
self
Huntsville, TX

There should be no limit to the number of bottles i want to buy from a distillery. Please cast votes in favor of HB 2349

Patricia Summers

My husband and myself as a citizen of this community. BARTLETT DISTILLERY in Conroe, TX
Conroe, TX

We support local business for our choices of fine products. Barletts distillery has provided a clean, educational , informative environment and contribution to our community. During the holidays , my husband and guests have tasted products and it has enhanced our family memories and social interactions. Hot buttered rum in winter, etc.. Its so difficult to decide if we get to keep our 1 to 2 bottles or share with friends since we are so currently limited. Please do not limit this purchase from this distillery any longer. We would very much appreciate it. They are not a fly by night business. Very nice, very clean, very welcoming and very much appreciated addition to this community. Please do not limit our customer experience and ability to buy from here.

Damon Henrichs
self Business Owner
Spring, TX

It is far past time for outdated liquor laws in Texas to go away. These laws are now only anachronistic, but highly favor "big business" while seeking to undermine small and independent business owners. There is no conceivable justification to limit the sale of liquor from an independent distiller to two bottles every 30 days. I was shocked to learn that this was even true. Why on earth shouldn't I be able to purchase a bottle for myself, a friend, and then a family member? What if I am trying to purchase Christmas gifts? Throwing a party that we want craft distilled spirits? The entire system is absurd and is forcing consumers to go to "big box" liquor stores. It is wrong.

By the way, so is the law that consumers can't purchase liquor on Sunday. This isn't 1950. People live their lives on Sunday. There's nothing wrong with having a drink on the Lord's day. Oh, I meant AT HOME . . .since obviously it is legal to enjoy liquor at any restaurant or bar on Sunday. Evidently, Texas is more interested in telling us what we can or can't purchase to consume at home than having reasonable liquor laws.

Mitchell Good

Self

Spring, TX

Please raise the limit for bottle purchases direct from distilleries. Texas has some great small distilleries and we need to support them as much as possible. The huge distributors make enough money already, let's help Mom and Pop.

Jeffrey Teets

Bartletts distillery

Conroe, TX

To whom it may concern,

Hello, my name is Jeffrey Teets. Bartletts is a local owned and operated family run business. Seeing this business try to expand threw the years has been a great pleasure. Bartletts has sponsored many of my events. To help grow the business I would personally purchase bottles for events to raise money with a raffle, for fellow families having hard times. Not everyone's pallet is the same. Bartletts has many of selected brands, and flavors. Always being limited to 2 bottles a month limits myself as well. Most of my 2 bottles go to a raffle or donated to someone. As I have stating this is to bring some light onto limitations. At most raffles people personally tell me they do not like this, they like that. Trying to guess the crowd before purchasing is rather stressful. Knowing that a family in need might not hit the amount that is need to help them in hard times. Seeing new customers at his establishment is great. Most out of town want to buy everything. To take home and enjoy with others. Then they are hit with the news, 2 bottle limit. This is money lost to a small business trying to get by in hard times. Their is no need for me to go further to a liquor store, and purchase from them. When his establishment is right next door. I would much rather support local direct. Than big corporations markup. I would like see this local family business thrive and expand into a bigger business. Raising the limit of purchase would greatly help expand the business, and allow freedom of choice for the people.

Thank you,

Jeffrey Teets

Hope this bill goes as planned, and helps a local business expand.

Daniel McNitt

Self

Lumberton, TX

I am writing in support of this bill. My wife and I travel throughout Texas visiting distilleries and wineries. We look to support our local small businesses. I think it is a very good idea to remove an arbitrary limit of just two products in a 30 day period. It seems this bill would allow better support of Texas businesses without creating a "underground" type wholesale market. Rather allow Texas residents and out of state visitors to support the Texas economy. I strongly encourage support for this measure and support for our small businesses. Thanks

David Schnell

self

Montgomery, TX

Please support Bill 2349. It will show your support for small business to enable more sales and profit for craft distillers by being able to sell directly to their customers. Healthy and strong small business is a cornerstone of our state and national economy. Thank you.

Roger Leger

Leger Petroleum Service

Houston, TX

Please consider allowing this bill to go through, i cannot image what would be a downside to allowing the bill to go into affect. As a consumer it only seems fare to allow me to be able to purchase 2 bottles of every spirit a distillery has to offer.

Respectfully Roger Leger

PAUL LEVEL
SELF
HOCKLEY, TX

I would like to show my support for this bill. Why should liquor stores alone be allowed to sell unlimited amounts of liquor. After all, we can buy unlimited amounts of meat, vegetables, wine, beer and on and on directly from the manufacturers why not spirits. Get real... give them an equal field.

Clarence Farrow, Smsgt retired
Self
Conroe, TX

Please support and pass HB 2349.

Lesa West
self
Conroe, TX

I love visiting our Texas distilleries, several of these I have found just by chance when on a road trip. If I like the product I would like to be able to purchase more than one bottle so I can share my find with friends. Why should we limit small Texas distilleries when we are not limiting purchases at liquor which are selling products that in some cases isn't even made in the USA. We should do everything we can to support our Texas economy!

William Shaw
Bartletts
Flower Mound, TX

I support HB2349 because I know Bartletts and Bendt as small business that are trying to make a living selling their products and make a little bit of the money back that they put in. They NEED to be able to sell more than 2 bottles of their products to a customer once a month in order to try and make some profit. I have been there, I used to own a brewery and it was a struggle to support my customers that wanted to buy more of my product to go until the law was changed. So, if I wanted to go to Total wine and get more than 2 bottles I could, why is that? Well, its because the big distributors that lobby and pay good money to their representatives claim that by letting the small business sell more than 2 bottles that takes away from their profits. We all know that is crap. Please let this Bill pass for the little guys, because without them making the product, the distributor would have nothing to sell anyway

Andrew Hanmore
Self
Conroe, TX

Limiting direct sales by distillers only serves to prevent small businesses from effectively marketing directly to consumers. It boosts liquor stores and distributors, at the expense of local distilleries who cannot afford to sell at the same small margins as big scale distillers.

William McCoy
Self - Cardiac Telemetry Technician
Conroe, TX

I stand in Support of HB 2349. As you are aware, the distilled spirits industry in Texas has seen tremendous growth over the last decade. Today, over 200 distilleries hold active distiller's permits in Texas, and the Texas distilled spirits industry has the potential for even more growth if the state modifies its current regulatory system.

Many of these Distilleries are small business, operated by our neighbors and friends. In the "Spirit" of Texas these products are of the highest quality, produced in small batches, and bring revenue into our communities rather than the pockets of large out of state Corporations. Allowing Texans to purchase a larger number of these products not only increases Tax revenues, but allows us to share our excellence and creativity with a larger audience, showing the world that Texas produces the FINEST quality of Spirits nationwide!

On a personal note, my family roots trace back to the Commonwealth of Kentucky, and generations swear that only Kentucky Bourbon is worth drinking. In my short time as a Texan I have found MANY better bourbons and whiskeys produced here than anywhere else (Please don't tell my Mom)!

I thank you for your consideration, and urge your quick passage of this Bill.

Matt Russell
self
McKinney, TX

Since we know that at least some distributors are now keeping for themselves, the entire idea that we HAVE to have them for consumer good is a load of crap. They can help get products elsewhere but those of us lucky enough to live near a distillery should be able to stop and pickup what we want rather than the state induced bottle limit. This will actually help the consumer as those stores that mark up prices well above what they paid the distributor will have to compete (at least locally) with shelf prices and not the secondary market mark up. How is that legal? They pay MSRP and then charge however much more they want. Being that this state is republican controlled, it should be less government on this issue instead of more. So let those who make what they make sell it as the consumer wants. Anyone listening?

Kevin Brock
Self
Conroe, TX

Distillers should not be so limited on how many bottles they can sell per month (2) when, as the actual distiller of the product, they have selling limits and retail stores (Spec's, etc.) do not.

Brian Martin
self
CONROE, TX

Some of these smaller distilleries have more than 2 labels (white, dark, spiced, extra aged...) of product I'd like to buy per month. Some of them even make 2 different kinds of liquor, like rum AND whiskey, and those come in different varieties. While I understand that you don't want them becoming distributors and I also understand the Jackson's might enjoy the monopoly they've maintained here in Texas (and I'm a happy customer of theirs as well). I don't understand why I can't buy a couple bottles of Bartlett's White Rum (that I love) and their whiskey (that is very difficult to find) from Bartlett's when I'm there! Making or breaking a product or company, should be up to the consumer! Not what "Spec" Jackson decides to carry.

Sergio Corral
Self
GODLEY, TX

I wholeheartedly agree with this bill. This is TEXAS. We are suppose to enjoy our freedoms here. It is ridiculous that that the State of Texas should restrict the quantity of bottles that I can buy in any given period.