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## **Anti-Consumer Wine Legislation Based on Faulty Claims**

*— Wineries, Not Retailers, the primary source of wine shipments in America—*

(SACRAMENTO, Calif)—Contrary to conventional wisdom, wineries are the most common source of wine shipped directly to consumers—not retailers as many presume. In a survey of state regulatory bodies that issue both retailers and wineries licenses for the shipment of wine to consumers conducted by the Specialty Wine Retailers Association, it was found that wine retailers only represent a small portion of the license holders. The survey of permits issued in New Hampshire, Nevada, North Dakota, Nebraska, Oregon and Wyoming found retailers hold only 15-20% of the permits issued.

“Many state regulators and legislators assume that because there are many more wine retailers in America than wineries, retailers will overwhelm any system that issues permits for direct shipment of wine and as a result choose to ban out-of-state retailers from shipping wine,” explained Tom Wark, Executive Director of the Specialty Wine Retailers Association. “It turns out that it’s largely wineries, not retailers, that obtain permits to ship wine direct to consumers.”

### **NUMROUS STATES ATTACK CONSUMERS ACCESS TO WINE**

In part because of the unjustified fear that retailers will overwhelm a regulatory agency that administers wine shipping licenses, many states have passed or attempted to pass legislation that prohibit consumer from purchasing wine from out-of-state retailers This unjustified sentiment was recently offered by Craig Wolf, CEO of the Wine & Spirit Wholesalers Association, in an interview with *Wine & Spirits Daily*: “There are scores of thousands of retailers, and if the state allows retailers in addition to wineries to ship, how is it possible that they will ever be able to regulate those sales?”

In 2007 legislation has been introduced or passed in Illinois, Missouri, Oregon, Florida, West Virginia, and Wisconsin that either prohibited or severely limited consumers ability to purchase wine from out-of-state retailers.

“States worried about regulating out-of-state wine shippers should not be focused on retailers since they represent the minority,” said Wark, “The facts show that the vast majority of wine retailers are concerned with their brick and mortar store, not the Internet.”

Specialty Wine Retailers Association advocates on behalf of wine retailers and consumers for fair wine shipping laws. More information on SWRA is available at: [www.specialtywineretailers.org](http://www.specialtywineretailers.org).

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