

The Otsego County Chamber

Strengthening Our Economy  Shaping Our Future

Media Release

The Otsego County Chamber **OPPOSES SELLING WINE IN GROCERY STORES**

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The Otsego County Chamber's Board of Directors and Business Action Committee overwhelmingly endorses the position, and actively joins with the local business community, of urging the New York State legislature to defeat the Governor's proposal to sell wine in grocery stores.

Chamber President & CEO Rob Robinson said the claims of benefits from the proposal are exaggerated. "The Governor is talking about new jobs and \$300 million in new revenue. Our research indicates that no such growth would take place, in fact there will be substantial job losses if this concept becomes reality."

According to Sharon Wilsey, owner of Best Wine and Spirits in Oneonta and member of the Chamber's Business Action Committee, there are several points to consider about the proposal:

- Grocery stores will not add jobs just because they are adding wine to their shelves.
- Small liquor stores realize upwards of half of their revenue from the sale of wine – reducing that income will force them to reduce their work staff or close their doors.
- The claim that doing this will help NY wineries is a fallacy – less than 2% of NY state wineries support this, most are too small to participate. Grocery stores will only carry 125 **national** brands, leaving little shelf space for independent wineries.

Wilsey also stated, “This is such a bad idea, in fact, that it has been 30 years since a state has adopted this concept. It does not create jobs, it costs jobs. It does not increase revenue; it increases drunk driving and underage violations. 90% of liquor sale violations happen in grocery stores. Albany needs a clear message from the business community – this is not the direction to pursue in their attempts to right New York’s fiscal ship.”

Robinson encourages Otsego County residents to contact their State Senator and Assembly Member and urge the defeat of the Wine Store and Liquor Industry Revitalization Act.