



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

George M. Borrello

## Senator George Borrello Introduces Bill to Feature New York Wines in Grocery Stores

GEORGE M. BORRELLO April 16, 2025

| ISSUE: **NEW YORK AGRICULTURE, NEW YORK WINES, WINE IN GROCERY STORES**



Initiative aimed at expanding the market for New York wines

**ALBANY, NY** — Senator George Borrello today announced he is introducing legislation, [S. 7398](#), that would allow grocery stores in New York to sell wine, but with a key provision: *only New York State-produced wines* would be eligible for sale.

The proposal is intended to support family farms and local vintners and boost New York's wine industry, which contributes nearly [\\$15 billion in direct economic impact](#) to New York

State. It also addresses concerns that a general law allowing wine sales in supermarkets would result in major national distributors paying for shelf space and crowding out New York-produced wines. Smaller wineries—many of which rely on direct-to-consumer sales and limited distribution—could find themselves shut out of the grocery market entirely.

“New York is home to one of the most diverse and innovative wine industries in the country. From the Lake Erie shoreline to the Finger Lakes and down to Long Island, our winemakers are producing award-winning wines that deserve a prominent place on grocery store shelves,” said Senator Borrello. “But if we allow out-of-state wines to flood our stores, it will be the big national brands—backed by powerful distributors—who dominate shelf space. Small New York producers are likely to be squeezed out entirely or reduced to a token presence on store shelves.”

Under current law, wine is sold primarily through standalone liquor stores. While proposals to allow wine sales in grocery stores have surfaced for years, they’ve been repeatedly defeated due to opposition from the liquor store lobby, which argues the change would harm independent retailers.

Borrello acknowledged their concerns and noted that his legislation strikes a balance—supporting New York’s wine industry while addressing the concerns of independent retailers and the liquor store lobby. The targeted approach would ensure that grocery sales expand in a way that uplifts local agriculture without undermining small, community-based wine and liquor shops.

He also said that he will soon be introducing legislation to address another concern of small wine and liquor retailers: the current prohibition on selling food products such as cheese, cured meats, olives, and crackers—items that complement wine and spirits. The goal is to level the playing field, as New York State currently prohibits liquor stores from selling any

type of food.

“For too long, outdated and often unfair regulations have held back our state’s wine and spirits industry,” Senator Borrello said. “It’s time to bring New York’s alcohol laws into the 21st century, because our small producers and retailers deserve a system that works for them, not against them.”

He noted that modernization begins with giving New York wines a fair shot. By allowing only New York-produced wines to be sold in grocery stores, he said his legislation provides a smart, targeted way to strengthen our homegrown wine industry without undercutting independent retailers.

“New York wines are world-class. But our small producers are fighting an uphill battle in a consolidated distribution market,” said Senator Borrello. “This bill would give them a real leg up, while expanding consumer access to local wines and supporting our state’s economy.”

New York is the third-largest wine-producing state in the nation, with more than 450 wineries and 35,000 acres of vineyards across 11 American Viticultural Areas (AVAs). The industry supports thousands of jobs and draws over 5 million tourists to wine country annually, generating nearly \$2 billion in tourism spending.

New York wines, particularly Rieslings and Cabernet Francs, continue to earn national and international acclaim while New York regions are frequently named among the best wine destinations in the world.

“This legislation isn’t just pro-agriculture—it’s pro-New York,” Senator Borrello added. “It supports our farmers, our small businesses, and our rural economies. And it ensures that if wine is sold in grocery stores, New Yorkers will see New York wines front and center.”

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## 2025-S7398

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- Introduced
- - In Committee Assembly
  - In Committee Senate
- - On Floor Calendar Assembly
  - On Floor Calendar Senate
- - Passed Assembly
  - Passed Senate
- Delivered to Governor
- Signed By Governor
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Relates to establishing grocery store wine licenses

April 14, 2025

In Senate Committee [Commerce, Economic Development and Small Business](#)

Sponsored by [George M. Borrello](#)

Do you support this bill?