



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brian X. Foley

Sen. Foley, Small Businesses Rally to Protect Jobs, Oppose Wine Sale in Grocery Stores

BRIAN X. FOLEY March 8, 2010

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On Saturday, March 6, 2010, State Senator Brian X. Foley (D – Blue Point) was joined by small business owners and activists in rallying against the governor's proposal to sell wine in grocery stores. The measure, which is proposed as part of the governor's budget, will cost thousands of jobs at small wine and liquor stores across the state and increase access to alcohol for underage drinkers.

"We are here to protect jobs and support our small businesses," said Sen. Brian X. Foley, who serves on the Senate Economic Development Committee. "Allowing wine to be sold in

grocery stores will cost jobs at a time when we can least afford to lose them. We must stand up for small wine and liquor stores that employ thousands of workers and contribute to our local economy. We must defeat this plan.”

The Last Store on Main Street Coalition – a group of small business owners from across New York State – underscored the dangers of allowing wine to be sold in grocery stores. “We are pleased to work with Senator Foley on this issue because selling wine in grocery stores will lead to thousands of jobs being lost at wine and liquor stores throughout New York State,” said Jeff Saunders, Founder of the Last Store on Main Street Coalition. The Coalition worked with Sen. Foley to help defeat a similar proposal last year.

“There is nothing more important than supporting our small businesses and that’s exactly what we’re doing by rallying against the proposal to sell wine in grocery stores,” said Phil Nolan, Supervisor of the Town of Islip. “I am proud to join small business owners, community activists, and Sen. Foley in standing up for jobs right here in Suffolk County.”

“In addition to costing jobs, selling wine in grocery stores will increase access to alcohol for minors,” said Mark Musetti, Manager of Pope Wine and Liquors, the site of Saturday’s rally. “Wine and Liquor stores are extremely vigilant of underage drinkers. A convenience store or supermarket would be a much easier target for minors looking to buy alcohol.”

In Florida, California and Texas, three states where wine is sold everywhere, the number of alcohol-related fatalities per 100,000 is more than double that of New York State. Even worse, alcohol related fatalities of those under age 21 are three times higher in these states, where wine is sold everywhere, than in New York which has independently owned licensees who are legally responsible for preventing youth from purchasing alcohol.

Selling wine in grocery stores would also pose a danger for Long Island’s wine industry. “Long Island wineries are overwhelmingly against this plan because it is bad for our businesses and bad for our partners in the wine stores,” said Steve Ciuffo of Pindar Vineyards. “We know that grocery stores will feature national brands and jug wines on their shelves, leaving little space for Long Island wines. That will hurt our businesses, which play

an important role in the Long Island tourism industry. We applaud Senator Foley for fighting with us to defeat this bad proposal.”