



NEWS FROM NEW YORK STATE SENATOR **JAMES SKOUFIS**



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****PRESS RELEASE****

Skoufis Bill Offering Flexibility to Bars & Restaurants Signed Into Law

Senator James Skoufis (D-Hudson Valley) announced that his bill authorizing the State Liquor Authority (SLA) to provide leeway for first-time administrative/clerical violations has been signed into law. The legislation, **S5979**, lessens headaches for bar and restaurant owners as they reopen by offering a “cure” period for any low-level administrative violations of the Alcoholic Beverage Control (ABC) Law they may incur. Such violations could include a missed filing deadline during a pandemic-related closure.

“Anyone familiar with the SLA’s complex system of licenses, forms, and filing deadlines knows there’s a lot for our taprooms, restaurants, and bars to keep track of,” said **Senator Skoufis**. “Given the pressure put on these small businesses to restrict operations or close entirely over the past two years, it stands to reason that we should provide every opportunity to help them get back on their feet. Allowing first-time violators to remedy what often amount to clerical issues with the SLA will keep them from accruing fines and help them get back to business sooner.”

In 2019, the Legislature passed a measure that provides a similar cure period for other small businesses with first-time violations, but this flexibility did not apply to those governed by the SLA and ABC Law.

“I want to extend my thanks to Senator Skoufis for sponsoring this bill,” said **Tommy O’Toole, Owner of O’Toole’s Pub (Monroe, NY) and President of the Orange County Tavern & Restaurant Association**. “It’s comforting to know that we have his support and--with the daily challenges that local ‘mom and pop’ restaurant and tavern owners face--we aren’t being forgotten.”

The Investigations & Government Operations Committee, which Senator Skoufis chairs, has jurisdiction over ABC Law. As part of a broader conversation around reforming the restrictive and antiquated alcohol regulations in New York, Skoufis is looking to advance dozens of ABC Law reforms in the 2022 legislative session.

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