**Responsible Alcohol Sales are Essential during COVID-19 Crisis**

By **[YOUR NAME HERE]**

The safety of **[COMPANY NAME]’s [XX]** employees and families, along with our local communities, consumers and business partners are our top priority during this unprecedented global pandemic.

We urge state and local policy makers and regulators to consider best practices in retail alcohol sales that will balance public safety and access without giving bad actors the best opportunity to set up shop since Prohibition. Right-sizing the economy will be difficult enough without fallout from the establishment of illegal marketplaces.

The **legal** beverage alcohol supply chain is essential for consumer safety and public health. Access to local, legal alcohol has been essential in the successful fight against illegal and unsafe alcohol marketplaces in the United States. Products from illegal sources can be extremely hazardous to consumers’ health. **Therefore, we urge you to prioritize consumer access and consider beverage alcohol retail outlets as “essential” during this time.**

Uniformity of local policies is paramount. If closures of alcohol retail outlets (both on or off premise) across localities or states occur inconsistently, there is an increased chance that people will travel interstate or among localities to find an open store with available supply. This will inevitably increase risk of spread among communities.

The alcohol industry accounts for 2.5 million jobs nationally, from manufacturers to wholesalers, to retail employees. The federal government collects $5.7 billion in excise taxes annually from the industry, while state and local governments collect $43.6 billion in consumer and business taxes. **[STATE]** relies on **[XX – find your data here:** <https://www.wswa.org/data-and-impact/economic-database>**]** in excise taxes collected from the industry annually to pay for a variety of expenses, including maintaining the health and safety of citizens.

Governments rely on these tax dollars, and a well-regulated marketplace to collect them.

Under the current circumstances, which present serious challenges, I would like to offer the following safe and responsible solution for consideration. Specifically, instead of closing alcohol retailers, states could:

* Permit curbside pickup of orders placed online with a retailer or enact provisions to allow curbside pickup during the COVID-19 pandemic;
* Allow retailer employees over 21 years of age to deliver alcohol to customers from off-premise locations after checking the customer’s identification;
* Enable restaurants to offer alcohol along with food orders for takeout or delivery;
* If a state allows third party vendors to deliver alcohol, these vendors should be vetted by regulators and held to the same standards as retail licensees when it comes to ensuring recipients are of legal drinking age and that the alcohol is being delivered in compliance with state and local laws.

During this time of increased health risks, it is of the utmost importance [STATE] governs our alcohol supply chain closely. Availability of real product from licensed liquor stores is essential to this task**. [STATE WHOLESALER ASSOCIATION]** has been dedicated to this task for decades and remains ready to work closely with your administration to prioritize consumer health and safety during this time.