**Subject: Oppose Harmful Tariffs on Alcohol**

My name is [NAME], I serve as [TITILE] at [COMPANY NAME]. I am writing to express my strong opposition to U.S. retaliatory tariffs on European wine and spirits. These tariffs cause significant economic harm to the American beverage alcohol and hospitality industry made up of thousands of producers, distributors, importers, retailers and restaurants already reeling from the impact of COVID-19 closures.

The wine and spirits industry has directly created an estimated 1.3 million American jobs, with wholesalers alone accounting for 87,722 jobs paying nearly $7.5 billion in wages annually in every state and congressional district across the country. America’s wine and spirits wholesalers are the vital link bringing an ever-expanding variety of brands from around the world that has led to consumer choice and positive market place trends that feed other industries such as tourism, dining, and hospitality. As local, family-owned businesses, America’s privately owned wholesalers and distributors are essential members of the U.S. economy.

As consumer demands have evolved and changed, wine and spirits wholesalers have diversified portfolios with products from around the globe to meet every taste, budget, and occasion—driving growth and creating a myriad of job opportunities for U.S. workers.

In October 2019, the U.S. implemented a 25 percent tariff on certain EU wine and spirits in response to the Airbus/Boeing WTO dispute and is currently

expanding the list of products on its list and increasing the tariff up to 100 percent. The cost of these tariffs does not fall on Europeans. The cost falls on American businesses, workers, and consumers in the form of lost jobs and sky-high retail prices for irreplaceable imported wine and spirits products ultimately reducing overall choice in the U.S.

The United States wine and spirits industry already faces retaliatory tariffs in critical export markets including the EU, as a result of the Section 232 steel and aluminum tariffs and the Airbus/Boeing WTO tariffs. This potential escalation by the U.S. is particularly troubling since American spirits and wines are already being negatively impacted by retaliatory tariffs imposed by the EU and several countries resulting from other trade disputes unrelated to the U.S. alcohol industry. For example, the EU’s 25 percent retaliatory tariff on American Whiskey has resulted in a 31 percent decrease in exports in the last year. The EU is the largest export market for American Whiskey totaling $704 million in 2018. Additional tariffs on EU wine and spirits will significantly increase pressure on the EU to impose additional tariffs on United States distilled spirits and wines. **We cannot emphasize this enough – there will be negative, long-lasting consequences felt across our country.**

The imposition of additional U.S. duties would cause significant economic harm to the American alcohol and hospitality industries working to recover from a pandemic that has resulted in thousands of lost U.S. jobs and the permanent closure of businesses. This includes importers, producers, distributors/wholesalers, retailers, and restaurants, as well as the related jobs throughout the distribution chain, such as shippers, truckers, warehouse workers, bookkeepers and accountants, sales representatives, customs brokers, managers, hospitality, and others. Many are solid middle-class family jobs.

In sum, imposing tariffs on alcohol products from Europe only harms the U.S. economy, threatens to lead to additional retaliatory tariffs on U.S. exports, and results in job losses across the U.S. in industries working to survive through the global pandemic.

In order to avoid this devastating economic impact and enable wine and spirits wholesalers to continue to meet American consumers’ diverse and evolving demands, I ask you to please urge USTR to remove alcohol products from the lists of proposed products that may be subject to tariffs in ongoing trade disputes. While we understand this is part of a larger negotiation, **it is unnecessary to involve alcohol in an unrelated dispute and should be stopped immediately.**

Sincerely,