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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

10/28/2020

WSWA CELEBRATES THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE PASSAGE OF THE TWENTY-FIRST AMENDMENT ENFORCEMENT ACT

Twenty Years After Its Passage, Attorneys General In Ohio And Michigan File The First Lawsuits Under The 21st Amendment Enforcement Act Against Out-Of-State Entities Illegally Shipping Wine And Spirits Across State Lines

WASHINGTON, D.C., 10/28/2020 – Today, Wine & Spirits Wholesalers of America (WSWA) and its nearly 400 family-owned member companies celebrate the 20th anniversary of the passage of the Twenty-First Amendment Enforcement Act.

“A well-known Chinese Proverb tells us the best time to plant a tree is twenty years ago,” **said WSWA CEO and President Michelle Korsmo**, “WSWA was instrumental in the passage of the Twenty-First Amendment Enforcement Act in 2000 and in July we saw Attorney General Yost of Ohio file the first, landmark lawsuit against out-of-state actors illegally shipping wine and spirits across state lines. Ohio sent a message to bad actors that it will stop those who illegally profit from unsuspecting customers, endanger public health and safety and compromise the collection of state consumer and business taxes – earlier this month Michigan Attorney General Nessel did the same.”

On October 28, 2000, Congress passed the 21st Amendment Enforcement Act allowing state attorneys general to bring civil action in federal court against out-of-state entities to enforce violations of their state laws relating to the importation or transportation of alcohol. WSWA supported the Act’s passage twenty years ago and actively encourages its use as an enforcement tool today because the illegal shipment of alcohol across state lines creates a wide range of transparency, accountability, health and safety problems for regulators and consumers. Concerns range from the loss of local and state taxes to the increased risk of underage access and a lack of a clear chain of custody to prevent dangerous or even deadly product adulteration.

In July of this year, Ohio Attorney General David Yost filed a motion in federal court for a preliminary injunction to immediately stop the shipment of liquor into Ohio from some of the country’s largest online wine retailers. **A month-long investigation found that the defendants alone were responsible for over 40,000 illegal shipments of wine and spirits in 2019 and circumvented the payment of state excise tax, general sales tax and most likely Ohio’s commercial activity tax.** Earlier this month, Michigan filed a civil injunction under the Twenty-first Amendment Enforcement Act against two illegal entities following cease and desist letters from the Michigan Liquor Control Commission (MLCC) last year.

About Wine & Spirits Wholesalers of America

WSWA is the national trade association representing the distribution tier of the wine and spirits industry, dedicated to advancing the interests and independence of distributors and brokers of wine and spirits. Founded in 1943, WSWA has more than 380 member companies in 50 states and the District of Columbia, and its members distribute more than 80 percent of all wine and spirits sold at wholesale in the United States.

To learn more, please visit www.wswa.org or connect with us on [Facebook](#) or [Twitter](#).

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