



# WSWA

## Membership Handbook

**Benefits and Resources to Serve  
American Family-Owned Wine &  
Spirits Wholesalers**

**2023**

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## What Is Wine and Spirits Wholesalers of America?

Founded in 1943, Wine & Spirits Wholesalers of America (WSWA) is the only national trade association representing the distribution tier of the industry, dedicated to advancing the interests and independence of distributors and brokers of wine and spirits.

WSWA has more than 380 member companies in 50 states and the District of Columbia, and its members distribute more than 80% of all wine and spirits sold at wholesale in the United States. American family-owned wine and spirits distributors are the local marketing and logistic experts in every state and every congressional district.

WSWA advocates on federal, state, regulatory and legal issues impacting distributors and the beverage alcohol industry. The association focuses on many important policy areas such as taxation of family-owned businesses, state-based alcohol regulation, social responsibility and impaired driving prevention.

WSWA also offers programs and events that help member careers and businesses thrive in a diverse and dynamic industry.

### As the middle layer of America’s three-tier alcohol system, America’s family-owned wholesalers:

- Support 88,000+ American jobs.
- Generate \$7.5 billion in wages.
- Generate \$80 billion in tax revenue.





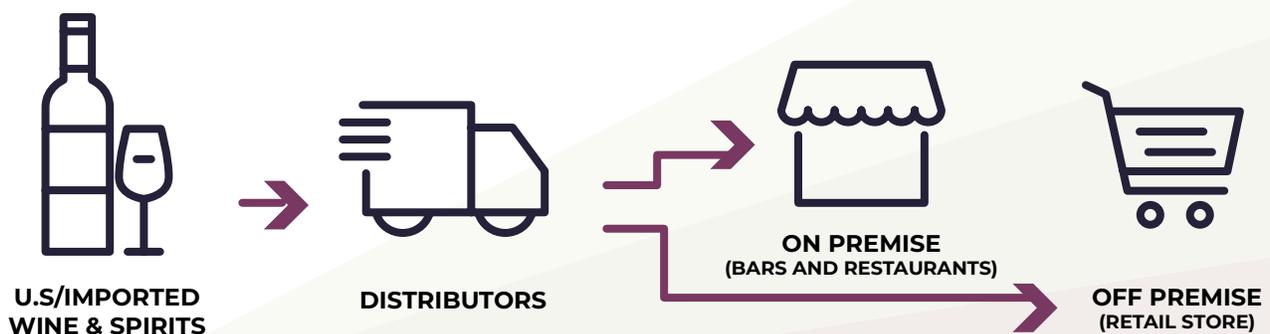
## WSWA Members: Who Are They and Why Are They Important?

Wine & Spirits Wholesalers of America (WSWA) currently has over **270** member companies, representing over **80 percent of wine and spirits sold** at wholesale in the U.S., supporting our efforts in the industry. Regular voting membership in WSWA is restricted to bona fide wholesalers and distributors of wine and/or spirits. WSWA also offers non-voting associate membership which is available to suppliers, vendors and other entities that provide goods and services directly to licensed wine and spirits wholesalers.

### The system creates a framework for:

- Provide liquidity to the entire alcohol industry by purchasing product from producers and selling to retailers on appropriate credit terms.
- Collect excise tax on the sale of alcoholic beverages to retailers and remit it to the state.
- Use their vast product knowledge and accumulated local sales data to educate retailers and restaurants.
- Increase transparency in the alcohol supply chain.
- Combine national logistics expertise with tailored local marketing.
- Act as the graphic design department for suppliers.

## America's Three-Tier System Moves The U.S. Economy Forward





## Resources to Defend the Three-Tier System

It is WSWA's main priority to **defend the three-tier system** against legislation that would begin to dismantle it. WSWA helps maintain the three-tier system by working with state wholesaler associations to educate legislators about the benefits of the system and why it is imperative the structure remains strong. Above all, the association is dedicated to **preventing the bright lines of the tiers from being blurred**.

Designed to prevent the abuses that led to Prohibition, the three-tier system was adopted by every state after Prohibition was repealed in 1933. The adoption of the **21st Amendment** gave each **state the right** to decide how alcohol is distributed within its borders, and WSWA supports maintaining this system to ensure our industry is **well-regulated and safe**.

### The system creates a framework for:

- Ensuring the orderly collection of taxes on beverage alcohol.
- Preventing the sale of counterfeit and dangerous products.
- Increasing variety and consumer access.
- Protecting oversight and accountability.



**State Level Advocacy:** WSWA's five-person state affairs team advocates against state legislation that would negatively impact the three-tier system. Each state has an assigned manager who serves as the interface between state associations and WSWA. State managers are ready to provide feedback and support, thereby ensuring state associations and WSWA members have the resources and knowledge they need to be successful advocates for the three-tier system.



**Federal Level Advocacy:** WSWA's Federal Affairs team focuses its efforts on ensuring strong three tier language is included in the STOP Act every five years. Additionally, WSWA opposes the shipping of alcohol through the postal service, utilizes Project 21 grassroots campaigns, and supports education through the reinstated 21st Amendment Caucus with supplier and retailer partners.



**Educational Collateral:** WSWA develops and maintains a large library of educational materials, which are made available to members for advocacy efforts. One-pagers, leave-behinds and presentations are available for grassroots efforts, informing legislators, and distribution at events.

## WSWA Advocates for Fair Taxes for Family-owned Wholesalers

WSWA is committed to fighting for fair taxation of family-owned businesses under the federal tax code. Our legislative goal is **promoting wholesaler growth and reinvestment** in their companies by **ensuring the fair taxation** for wine and spirits wholesalers.

### The association's efforts include:

- **199A:** Also known as the **20% deduction on qualified business income**, this provision is critically important to keeping wholesalers competitive. We advocate to keep this part of the U.S. Code in place.
- **Equal tax treatment of family-owned businesses held in trust:** Recently proposed federal legislation would raise family-owned business taxes to over 40%, while taxing giant corporations like Amazon at 21%. We work to guarantee this doesn't happen.
- **Business meals deduction:** WSWA worked to ensure Congress acted with bipartisan support to **fully reinstate the tax deduction for business meals** in late 2020. We will continue to advocate for this important provision on behalf of the entire hospitality industry.
- **Last in, first out (LIFO) accounting:** LIFO is a more than 80-year-old **inventory accounting system** which is used by nearly every WSWA member company. WSWA works with Congress to **ensure LIFO is not repealed**.
- **Estate taxes:** WSWA advocates to keep the **current exemptions** in the tax code, which help family-owned wine and spirits wholesalers remain healthy as operations move from one generation to the next.



# WSWA Advocates Against the Biggest Threat to the Industry: Direct-to-Consumer Shipping

WSWA works with state wholesaler associations and member companies in every state around the country to advocate in state capitols against the biggest threat to the industry and the three-tier system: direct-to-consumer (DTC) shipping.

## WSWA Anti-DTC Advocacy Efforts

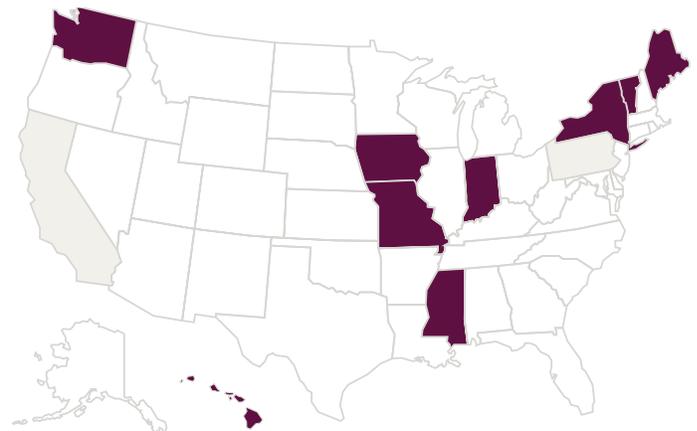
- WSWA's vast DTC advocacy resource library contains talking points, one-pagers and model language. Visit [www.wswa.org/DTC-know-the-whole-story](https://www.wswa.org/DTC-know-the-whole-story).
- WSWA's expanded state affairs team holds comprehensive DTC policy knowledge and helps support state advocacy with comment letters, branded educational documents and testimony advocating against state and federal legislation.
- WSWA's grassroots initiative Project 21 activates members' employees so that legislators hear from their constituents about the negative impact of DTC legislation.
- WSWA advocates for local, licensed delivery as the responsible alcohol delivery solution.

## Did you know?

- WSWA's State Advisory Council, made up of state wholesaler associations, member government affairs employees and member lobbyists, meets once a month to discuss and share strategies to defend against direct-to-consumer shipping legislation.

**IN 2022,  
ZERO STATE LEGISLATURES  
CHOSE TO ENACT DTC  
LEGISLATION.**

-  PENDING DTC LEGISLATION
-  DEFEATED DTC LEGISLATION



## WSWA Advocates Against Shipping Alcohol Via the USPS

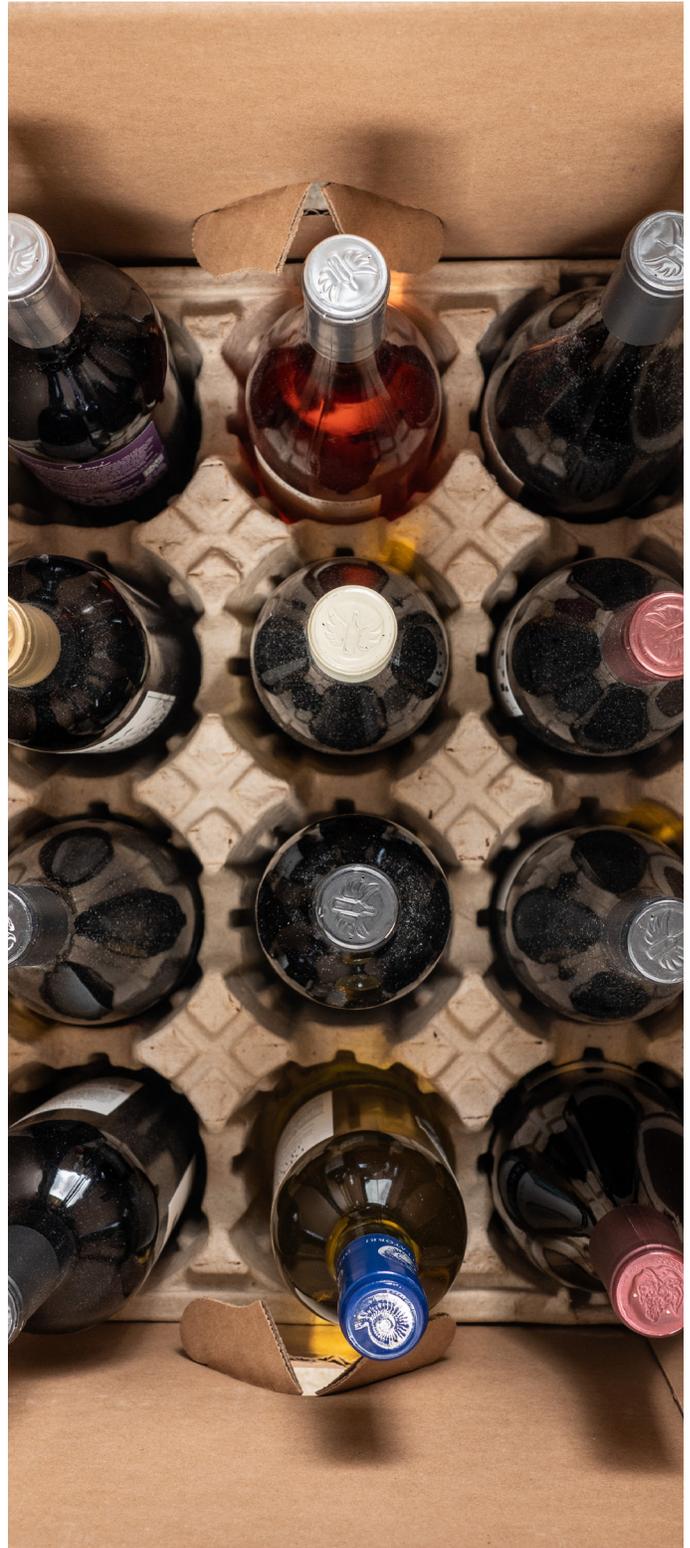
There is an effort in Congress to repeal longstanding federal policy that prohibits the United States Postal Service (USPS) from shipping alcohol. If successful, such a measure would undermine nearly 90 years of successful state-based alcohol regulation. It would also compromise the public health and safety priorities the current law protects.

WSWA members are **committed to stewarding and distributing beverage alcohol products safely and effectively** — sustaining a dynamic, growing marketplace and contributing to the economy.

It is critical for members of Congress to keep in mind that the current U.S. system of alcohol regulation exists to **defend the public** and the beverage alcohol marketplace.

### These important safeguards include the following:

- **Protecting consumers** from the introduction of **unsafe, counterfeit and unlicensed alcohol** into the American marketplace.
- Ensuring that the production, distribution and sale of alcohol is limited to those with a **proper license and regulatory oversight**.
- Ensuring alcohol is **only purchased** and/or received by consumers who are **21 years of age or older** and deliveries are made in **accordance with state and local laws**.
- Carrying out the effective and reliable collection of state and local sales and **alcohol excise taxes**.
- Since every state has a distinct and unique alcohol regulatory framework, allowing the USPS to ship alcohol would also tremendously **diminish the primary authority** of states and local governments to regulate alcohol within their borders. In addition, legalizing such alcohol shipments would **inhibit the collection of millions of dollars** in critical excise and sales tax revenue, while **undercutting local wholesalers and retailers**.



# Combatting Impaired Driving and Underage Alcohol Access

As a socially sensitive product category, beverage alcohol and the industry that supplies and sells it must be managed with special care. WSWA remains steadfast in its **commitment** to fighting **impaired driving and underage access to alcohol** in all forms.

## Impaired Driving

WSWA advocates for a comprehensive legislative strategy to prevent impaired driving. The association has **endorsed numerous bills in Congress** to combat both alcohol and multi-substance impaired driving and ensure effective tools and resources are available to continue research, prevention, and enforcement. Some of our successes include:

- **The Drug-Impaired Driving Education Act** establishes an annual \$5 million federal grant program for states to educate the public on the dangers of drug-impaired driving.
- **The Prevent Impaired Driving Child Endangerment Act** withholds highway funding from states that don't adopt specific laws (like New York state's Leandra's Law) to make it a felony to drive drunk or impaired with a passenger under the age of 16.
- **The Multiple Substance Impaired Driving Prevention Act** allows funds to be used for drug toxicology, impaired-driving related training for law enforcement, and general offender monitoring technology.

## Sober Truth on Preventing (STOP) Underage Drinking Act

Since 2006, the STOP Act has been successful **in helping to reduce America's underage drinking rate**. From promoting better public health monitoring and surveillance of underage drinking to supporting community action to prevent factors that contribute to it, the STOP Act has helped make progress in tackling underage drinking.

WSWA supports the **reauthorization of the STOP Act**, which must be passed by Congress in 2022.

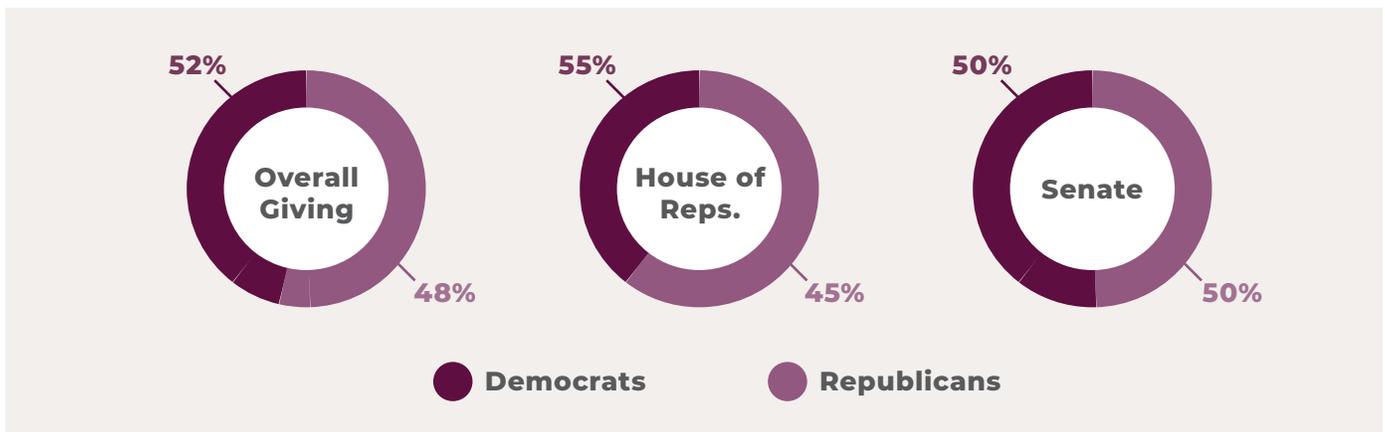


## WSWA-PAC

### Did you know?

WSWA has a **political arm** called the Wine & Spirits Wholesalers of America Political Action Committee, or WSWA- PAC that **supports pro-wholesaler candidates** at the national level. WSWA- PAC is a bipartisan organization dedicated to helping to elect candidates who **support the three-tier system**, regardless of their political party

WSWA-PAC has approximately 1,600 wholesaler employees from 40 member companies contributing each year, giving a total of **\$2 million a cycle** to fund the campaigns of those who promote and protect our industry.



Each election cycle, WSWA-PAC supports approximately **250 candidates** for the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate. WSWA-PAC hosts **multiple fundraisers** throughout the year to advance the wholesaler brand. During these events, wholesaler employees in DC provide a unique experience by preparing **specialty wine and spirits tastings** for the political candidates and encouraging WSWA members in attendance to connect with those running for office.





## WSWA’s Project Twenty-One

Project Twenty-One is a grassroots network enabling professionals at all levels of the American beverage alcohol industry to amplify their voices for political advocacy. The platform allows individuals to write, text or tweet their elected representatives in real time, encouraging them to support or oppose legislation that impacts the industry.

Since its inception, Project Twenty-One has attracted 8,000-plus advocates and generated over 47,000 messages sent to legislators around the country. This force multiplier builds momentum when activating the associations efforts to bring about positive change in regards to beverage alcohol laws and regulations.

Project Twenty-One has launched campaigns on the federal and state level combatting or supporting legislative initiatives that affect the wholesale tier in conjunction with our retail partners. This, along with our lobbying efforts and advocacy, is one of the many tools the association can utilize to benefit its membership, empowering WSWA company employees to make their voices heard.

“The Maine Beer & Wine Distributors Association had a direct-to-consumer (DTC) legislative fight and partnered with WSWA to mobilize Project Twenty-One as an effective tool to communicate quickly,” said Cheryl Timberlake, President of Capitol Insights and advocate for MBWD. “This was a great resource to garner opposition to legislation.”

One method WSWA uses to spread awareness about Project Twenty-One is providing posters in member companies’ warehouses, breakrooms and sales offices. We also encourage more participation through mobile phones by way of QR codes, which allows field reps and others to quickly access the messaging platform.

**PROJECT twenty one**  
AN ALCOHOL INDUSTRY ALLIANCE

JOIN TODAY!

IN 8 SECONDS OR LESS, TELL YOUR STATE REPRESENTATIVE TO VOTE NO TO DTC SPIRITS SHIPPING IN MAINE!

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**TAKE ACTION: OPPOSE ALCOHOL SHIPPING THROUGH USPS**

Congresswoman Jackie Speier (D-CA) is expected to introduce the United States Postal Service Shipping Equity Act, which would undermine nearly 80 years of successful state-based alcohol regulation.

This legislation would allow the USPS to ship alcohol, regardless of the ability to circumvent distributors and retailers through direct shipment to consumers from producers and retailers. This would undermine the state-based regulated three tier system for alcohol and compromise public health and safety priorities that benefit consumers.

Each state has a distinct and effective regulatory framework. WSWA opposes allowing USPS to directly ship alcohol. It would diminish primary authority of the states and local governments to regulate alcohol within their borders.

Send an email to your official with one click!

Title

Your full name

Street address

Zip code  city and state not required

Phone number

Email address

**Send Email**

Subject: OPPOSE ALCOHOL SHIPPING THROUGH USPS

Enter your message

I am writing to express my strong opposition to any legislation which would allow the United States Postal Service (USPS) to ship beverage alcohol. Allowing the USPS to handle alcohol is simply not a



## Warehouse Tour Program – Bringing Elected Officials to You

WSWA facilitates warehouse tours for local, state and federal elected officials to visit their local wine and spirits wholesalers. We work with local distributors to:

- Coordinate elected officials visiting your facility and meeting your employees.
- Demonstrate the value of wholesalers to their states and local communities.
- Showcase the role of wholesalers as the central hub of the three-tier system.

The more elected officials know about wholesalers, the more likely they are to support wholesalers and the three-tier system. Also, pro-industry advocacy is much more effective when it leverages relationships that have already been formed during a warehouse tour.



## WSWA's Federal Regulatory Advocacy

### Did you know?

WSWA's Legal and Regulatory Team **tracks federal regulatory actions** impacting the wholesale tier.

- **Alcohol and Tobacco Tax and Trade Bureau (TTB):** The team closely monitors TTB activities and **comments on proposed rulemaking**. The team has **expert knowledge** on the **Federal Alcohol Administration Act (FAA Act)** and how regulations impact the wholesale tier.  
**Pertinent regulatory issues include:**
  - o Changes to standards of fill
  - o Trade practice requirements
  - o Guidance updates
- **Other Federal Agencies:** The team also monitors and comments on issues originating in other agencies on issues like:
  - o Commercial trucking regulations
  - o Overtime eligibility
  - o CBD regulation
- **Executive Branch Initiatives:** The team also follows and comments on actions like the 2021 Executive Order on Competition and how cannabis should be federally regulated.





## State Advocacy Actions

### Did you know?

WSWA works on behalf of members to educate lawmakers on the value of wholesalers, preserving the three-tier system by defending against legislation that would dismantle it. Topics of particular interest for state advocacy include:

- **Direct-to-consumer shipping**
- **Satellite locations**
- **On-site sales**
- **Self-distribution**

WSWA works **with state wholesaler associations and member government affairs representatives** to **develop advocacy strategies, draft comment letters, craft talking points, and testify in front of committees** in states across the nation.

The four-person state team works diligently to advocate for legislation that maintains the three-tier system while advancing consumers' desire for the simplicity and convenience of e-commerce. Topics that have come up again and again in this arena include **local, licensed delivery and to-go sales**.

WSWA participates in many **national advocacy groups** to develop relationships with legislators from across the country and educate them on the importance of maintaining the three-tier system. While we have the attention of state legislators; the association also makes it a point to educate them regarding the value that wholesalers bring to local communities.



## Legal Research, Analysis and Guidance

### Did you know?

WSWA's Legal and Regulatory Team is a one-stop source for insights and analysis into:

- **State laws and regulations:** The team has broad and deep knowledge of the mechanics of laws and regulations regulating suppliers, wholesalers and retailers. The team maintains a **national database** of this information and routinely prepares **surveys** and **analyses on these laws** for members to support legal and legislative advocacy efforts.
- **State legislative drafting guidance:** As new issues arise — such as local, licensed delivery by on- and off-premise retailers — the team **develops guidance** on how members and state associations can best approach new legislation.
- **Emerging issues:** The team routinely **analyzes new issues** in the beverage alcohol sector to identify opportunities for industry success in areas such as e-commerce, product innovations and new routes to market.
- **Strategy, recommendations and potential roadblocks:** The team routinely counsels members and state associations on legislative changes and emerging regulatory issues.



## WSWA Federal and State Litigation Monitoring

### Did you know?

WSWA **monitors litigation** at the **federal and state** levels that could affect wholesalers, states' right to regulate alcohol, and the three-tier system. Some cases are potentially influential enough that WSWA will **file or join amicus briefs** and counsel states and state associations on our perspectives of the law. Issues we follow generally involve alcohol and the 21st Amendment, the dormant Commerce Clause, antitrust legislation and the preemption of federal law, among others.

Currently, we are **actively tracking** and advocating our positions in retailer interstate shipping litigation. In a number of states, in-state retailers are allowed to deliver and/or ship wine to consumers, but out-of-state retailers are prohibited from doing the same. WSWA **argues** that **out-of-state wine retailers** are pushing for a large exception: they **seek to bypass the three-tier system** that in-state wine retailers must go through.

Each month, we schedule a call with the various member stakeholders that are fighting this and other issues in their state, and we help by **reviewing briefs, finding experts, writing amicus briefs, and counseling** on the legal and policy issues.



## Legislative Trends and Analysis Across the Country

Using legislative aggregation, tracking and reporting tools, WSWA can provide **detailed analysis of trends** across the country for a number of priorities. These trends can provide members with **a clear look at the current industry focus** as well as a peek at where the industry may be headed.

In this past year alone, WSWA has tracked legislation ranging from **direct-to-consumer (DTC) shipping, to-go and delivery, RTD beverages, expanded privileges for alcohol manufacturers, licensing limits, privatization, CBD in alcoholic beverages,** and more.

Tracking trends in any given year can allow members to **accurately plan for the future.** Through sophisticated monitoring tools, WSWA can be confident of upcoming threats and opportunities.

### Did you know? In 2022, WSWA:

- Organized a legislative database for **20 separate bill categories** in all 50 states
- Followed the introduction of over **750 relevant bills** in 46 states
- Tracked the enactment and **impact of over 48 bills** in the session.





## WSWA State Advisory Council

The WSWA State Advisory Council is for members highly involved in **state legislative affairs**. The group consists of state wholesaler association leaders and member company government affairs representatives from nearly every state.

WSWA state affairs staff regularly engages with the State Advisory Council to provide resources and **create a community** and platform that **fosters discussion and solutions** regarding the political, legislative, regulatory and legal issues and threats facing wholesalers across the country.

By providing a venue for wholesaler representatives to compare notes and discuss strategy, the council **increases the effectiveness of individual state associations**. The group also enables wholesalers to speak with a unified voice to policymakers across the country.

The State Advisory Council meets once a month via conference call during the state legislative session. While legislatures consider bills, council members also receive the **weekly State of Play** legislative newsletter that summarizes all the pending legislation that could impact wholesalers.





## Coalitions and Industry Partnerships

Did you know WSWA is a sought-after partner in many efforts to lobby Congress, state legislatures and local government? Our partners understand the influence of WSWA and our membership and are eager to work with us to effect changes. We collaborate with beverage alcohol industry partners, family-owned businesses, the wholesale industry at large and many more organizations to amplify our message to elected officials and policymakers.

Here is just a sampling of some of the industry allies and issues we work with:



- #HelpHospitality
- Dietary guidelines on alcohol consumption
- Changes to overtime rules
- Family Business Estate Tax Coalition
- Commercial truck driving
- Fight against USPS shipping of alcohol
- Critical Infrastructure Supply Chain Council



## Access LIVE

*Formerly the WSWA Convention & Exposition*

### What is it?

WSWA Access LIVE was formerly known as the WSWA Annual Convention & Exposition. While this event has been around for almost 80 years, over the past two iterations WSWA staff has reimagined it to better suit the needs of today's American alcohol industry and provide attendees from all three tiers with greater resources and a more effective experience. Access LIVE brings together all three tiers of the wine and spirits to collectively connect, innovate, grow and address key industry challenges. There is no other event in the industry that rallies so much expertise, networking, solutions and opportunities under one roof!

### When is it?

- **2023 Access LIVE:** April 2–5, 2023 — Gaylord Palms Resort, Orlando
- **2024 Access LIVE:** Jan 29–Feb 1, 2024 — The Forum by Caesars Palace, Las Vegas
- **2025 Access LIVE:** February 3–6, 2025 — Gaylord Rockies Resort, Denver
- **2026 Access LIVE:** February 2–5, 2026 — The Forum by Caesars Palace, Las Vegas
- **2027 Access LIVE:** February 1–4, 2027 — Gaylord Texan Resort, Dallas

### Who attends?

- Wine and spirits wholesalers
- Suppliers and industry service providers
- Wine and spirits retailers
- Industry media

### Interested in learning more?

For more information, visit  
[www.accesslive.wswa.org](http://www.accesslive.wswa.org)

#### or contact

WSWA's Vice President of Meetings & Conventions, Kari Langerman  
[kari@wswa.org](mailto:kari@wswa.org)





## Brand Battle

### What is it?

Brand Battle is a *Shark Tank*-style pitch competition in which new and emerging brands present their products to a panel of distributors to see if they have what it takes to make it in today's U.S. marketplace. Launched at WSWA Access LIVE (previously known as the WSWA Convention & Exposition), Brand Battle is a high-energy, crowd-pleasing event that allows contenders to take center stage and receive valuable insight from the leaders of our industry.

### When is it?

The Brand Battle Tournament begins approximately 12 weeks prior to Access LIVE with a category tournament every Tuesday. The final showdown occurs at Access LIVE, where each category winner competes to be crowned the year's Brand Battle Champion!

### Tournament categories include:

- **Vodka/Gin**
- **Whiskey/Whisky/Bourbon/Scotch**
- **Cordial/Liqueur/Mixers/After Dinner Drinks**
- **RTDs/Hard Seltzers**
- **Rum**
- **Lifestyle (Low/No Alcohol)**
- **Tequila/Mezcal/Cachaça**
- **Wine**

### The wholesaler member selection committee evaluates entries based on the following criteria:

- Uniqueness of story and product
- Compelling packaging
- Possibility of success in the marketplace
- Any standout features

Once the category contenders are selected, they compete virtually in category rounds for the chance to be category winners, which will ultimately compete live at the Brand Battle Championship!



## Forum on the Hill

### What is it?

The Forum on the Hill is the **annual membership meeting** for WSWA's Board of Directors, Council Chairs and Vice-Chairs, company executives, owners and leadership, next-generation and rising leaders, state association leadership and government affairs teams. The event is held annually, typically in mid-September.

Attendees of the membership meeting also have the opportunity to meet with **their members of Congress during a Fly-in/Capitol Hill Day** to discuss issues impacting American family-owned wine and spirits wholesalers.

Combines two meetings into one — the WSWA **membership meeting** (formerly known as the Fall Membership Meeting) and the **legislative Fly-In** — to create one comprehensive meeting for all WSWA wholesaler members. This three-day event brings together WSWA members nationwide for an opportunity to:

- **Gain a deeper understanding of WSWA's comprehensive advocacy efforts.**
- **Hold roundtable discussions on industry hot topics.**
- **Engage with industry peers during committee, council and task force meetings.**
- **Learn what WSWA has in store over the coming year!**



## WSWA Council for Leadership Development (CLD)

### What is it?

The WSWA Council for Leadership Development (CLD) was developed over 60 years ago and brings together rising leaders in the wholesale tier. Over the past decades, this group and the associated conference have evolved but the focus of the Council remains the same: to provide a space for the future leaders to share ideas, learn about industry topics and trends, develop and improve leadership skills, and to network with the alcohol industry's future leaders.

The CLD provides many opportunities for our alcohol industry's next generation of leaders and rising managers including:

- Building an educational foundation of essential policy, legislative, regulatory, marketing and trend information future leaders need to advance in their careers.
- Making connections with wholesaler, supplier and service provider peers — as well as current industry leaders, speakers, panelists and the WSWA staff/leadership team.
- Enhancing leadership skills and fine-tuning technology and management abilities.

### When is it?

The CLD Conference is held annually in mid-July, rotating among cities around the U.S.

### Who can attend?

Any rising leader within a member wholesaler company.



## NextGen Leaders Summit

### What is it?

The NextGen Leaders Summit is designed to help **develop the next generation** of **family owners** and **non-family executive leadership** within WSWA member companies. Whether that generation is currently running the company or is a rising leader, this meeting is the place to gather, discuss unique business challenges, network with peers and gain industry insights.

### Key insights From the NextGen Leaders Summit

- Attendees are comprised of both family and non-family employees involved with the succession plan at their companies.
- The summit focuses on a select group of attendees, enabling opportunities for in-depth industry discussions on family business issues.
- Educational sessions and speakers focus on providing interactive content with more strategic leadership questions and goals.
- Participants engage with their peers at like-minded businesses in the wholesale tier.

The NextGen Leaders Summit began in 2021 as a spinoff of the Council for Leadership Development (CLD) Conference, taking CLD back to its roots.

### When is it?

Currently, the NextGen Leaders' Summit **takes place in July**, the same week as the CLD Conference. Throughout the year, there will be various opportunities for NextGen Leaders to gather at other WSWA events.



## Women's Leadership Council

WSWA has a Women's Leadership Council (WLC) created to provide an opportunity for women leaders to come together? The WLC's mission is to **educate, elevate and empower** members, as well as industry leaders with the three-tier system, advancing women and providing a platform for the exchange of ideas and knowledge with peers.

The WLC is governed by an advisory board of 10 elected women leaders.

### WLC Initiatives

The WLC achieves its goals is by providing development and networking opportunities through the council's initiatives:

- **WLC Membership/Networking** is complimentary to any wholesaler employee who wants to connect with peers and network in a meaningful way. The WLC hosts **quarterly membership calls** on a variety of topics that impact the daily work environment of women in wholesale.
- **WLC Mentorship Program** is **six-month program** for women in wholesale looking to evolve as leaders, develop personal goals and learn from other distributor women.
- **WLC Leadership Development/Conference** provides professional skill development and networking through webinars and our **annual in-person** conference in Washington, D.C. Want to start a women's group? We can help. Want to develop your business acumen, increase your knowledge of industry trends, acquire advanced finance skills, build your brand, be a servant leader? Our conference has covered these topics and more.
- **WLC Philanthropy** is at the core of this group. The WLC has found a way to **give back** to the community and support causes that make an impact.



## Winter State Policy Conference

WSWA's Winter State Policy Conference (WSPC) is an annual multi-day gathering of the industry's premier thought leaders to discuss the **political, legislative, and legal issues** facing America's family-owned wholesalers. WSWA wholesaler members, state association leaders, government affairs consultants and regulatory staff are all encouraged to attend.

WSPC participants gather to enjoy a wide range of programming including educational sessions, dinner and cocktail hours, and camaraderie with industry peers.

### Comprehensive educational sessions cover topics such as:

- **Resource Development:** learn about **best practices** for creating talking points, leave-behinds, pre-drafted testimony.
- **Communications:** debate key **priority issues** to better your team's advocacy efforts on the ground.
- **Data:** gain a better understanding of **consumer concerns** and how to **use data** in advocacy efforts.
- **Industry Partnership:** discuss common issues with parallel industry representatives.
- **Emerging Issues:** share knowledge and receive real-time feedback from industry peers.

The Winter State Policy Conference rotates cities and is typically held in early December each year.

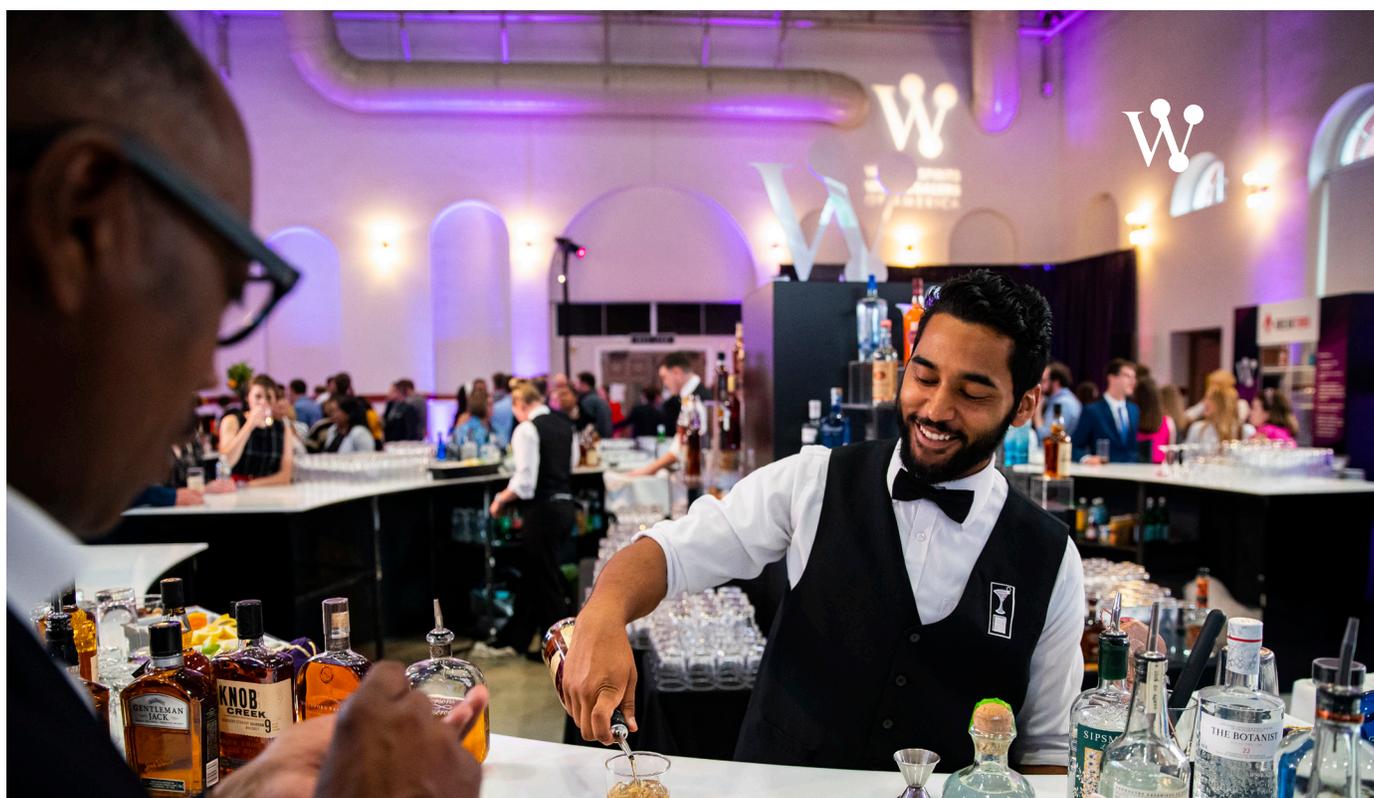


## Toast to Congress: WSWA's Signature Event on Capitol Hill

WSWA hosts an **annual event to advance advocacy** on Capitol Hill. At Toast to Congress, WSWA member companies have the opportunity to visit with their members of Congress, both in the House and Senate. This allows for meaningful conversations with representatives and wholesalers on the priorities of the wholesale tier and the roles companies play in local communities.

### WSWA's Toast to Congress:

- Serves as WSWA's annual **branding event showcasing** our organization and our **wholesaler members** to lawmakers and key staff on Capitol Hill, the administration and state advocacy organizations.
- Provides a **face-to-face networking** and educational opportunity for WSWA Government Affairs, Regulatory Affairs and Communications teams to their respective targeted audiences.
- Is an opportunity for **WSWA membership to engage** with elected officials and their staff.



## WSWA's SipSource

### Did you know?

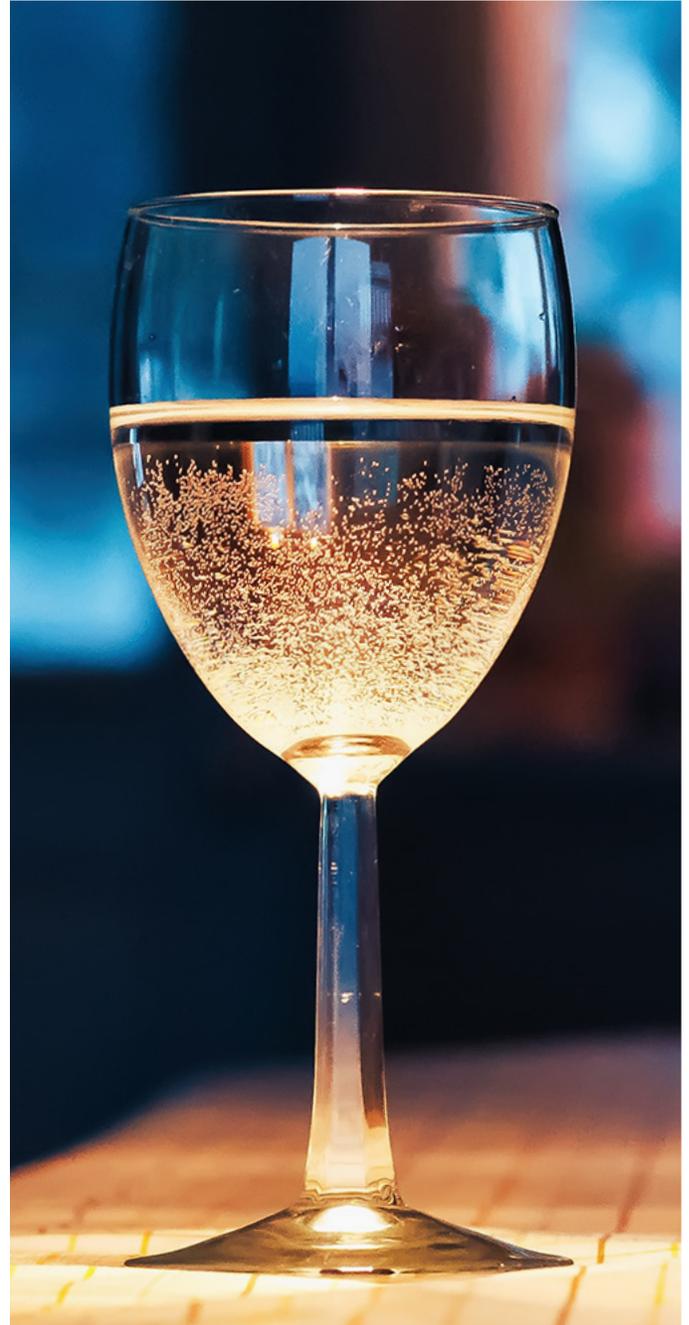
SipSource is a suite of tools created by WSWA to **leverage aggregated and trended wine and spirits distributor depletion data** to enable profound market insights. SipSource is the only data-driven source that provides a comprehensive **view of trends** in the industry.

Wine and spirits sales occur through hundreds of thousands of accounts. The disjointed nature of the market makes it nearly impossible to collect data from all these retailers. On the other hand, wholesalers provide distribution to all kinds of retailers, **so aggregating wholesale data** provides unrivaled insight into all channels in the three-tier system — **both on-premise and off-premise.**

In collaboration with **Vermont Information Processing (VIP)**, WSWA collects and aggregates the data from contributing member companies. **Each entity owns its own data**, which is kept completely confidential. The trends from the aggregated data are **analyzed and shared with subscribers.**

SipSource does **not** report brand-level data (nor any information or data points that would reveal any individual supplier, wholesaler or retailer). However, it does report **on a number of product segments** and attributes. For example, you can see how 750 ml bottles of Pinot Noir from France priced between \$35 and \$74.99 are selling in restaurants versus nightclubs in various regions of the country.

Our **goal is to have all WSWA members participate** and share data so everyone can benefit. Wholesaler members that participate have **free access to the SipSource trends.** WSWA also sells SipSource trends data to non-members, such as suppliers and retailers.





# WSWA Wholesaler Purchasing Program — Vendor Discounts

WSWA has partnered with **Distributors Solutions** to offer a portfolio of trusted industry-specific preferred suppliers of products and services to WSWA wholesaler members at **significant discounts**. The following categories of products and services are available to WSWA wholesaler members:

### Employee Savings Programs

- Company-owned cellular services

### Insurance

- Health benefits

### IT

- Personal cellular services and accessories

### Office

- Copier purchase/leasing
- Energy management
- Office supplies
- Small package shipping

### Personnel

- Employee screening services
- First aid and safety supplies
- Training and safety management
- Uniforms
- Rental cars

### Print Shop

- Print shop supplies
- Printing equipment

### Transportation

- Auto parts and supplies
- Driver risk management
- Fleet vehicles
- Fuel hedging
- Lift gates
- Oil and lubricants
- Tires
- Trailers

### Warehouse

- Floor sweepers
- Forklifts, pallet jacks, batteries and chargers
- Industrial and cooler doors
- Loading dock equipment and accessories
- Maintenance, repair, and operations supplies
- Stretch film, wrap machines
- Recycling



## WSWA Educational Foundation College Scholarships

Each year, the WSWA Educational Foundation offers two different scholarship programs for college students to help with the costs of higher education:

- **WSWA Educational Foundation College Scholarship Program**

- o Exclusively for the children of WSWA-member-company employees pursuing an undergraduate degree (i.e., trade school, associate's, or bachelor's degree).
- o Fifty \$2,000 scholarships are awarded each year.
- o Over 400 scholarships have been awarded since 2010, for a total value over \$850,000.

- **Robert Qualls Scholarship**

- o Founded by both Southern Glazer's Wine & Spirits and Tito's (Fifth Generation) to honor the legacy of longtime industry member Robert Qualls, who had worked at both companies.
- o Open to anyone connected to the alcohol industry (i.e., employed by or child of an employee of a supplier, wholesaler, or retailer) pursuing a degree or certification in hospitality with plans to work in the hospitality industry.
- o Four \$5,000 scholarships awarded each year.

The application window for both scholarships runs from mid-March through the end of May each year. We encourage all members to promote these scholarships to their employees.

**Did you know?** WSWA's foundation also engages in other initiatives, including research studies that examine social responsibility perceptions and other topics relevant to wholesalers. We look forward to expanding the foundation's reach.



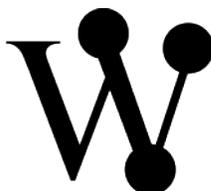
# WSWA Educational Foundation

## Did you know?

The WSWA Educational Foundation engages in research studies that examine social responsibility perceptions and other topics relevant to wine and spirits wholesalers. We look forward to expanding the foundation’s reach.

### Foundation Dollars at Work:

In 2022, the Foundation funded a study in partnership with Morning Consult that **measured perception of direct-to-consumer (DTC) spirits shipping** among American mothers and found a near unanimous (91%) agreement among those surveyed that preventing underage drinking is important for lawmakers to consider when drafting new alcohol laws or regulations. With the majority of moms (73%) considering it “extremely important,” the results send a clear message to lawmakers who may be considering DTC spirits shipping legislation. Furthermore, 72% of American mothers are concerned that the DTC shipping of spirits across state lines will increase underage access to alcohol.



WINE & SPIRITS WHOLESALERS OF AMERICA  
U.S. MOMS CONCERNED THAT DTC SPIRITS SHIPPING IS DANGEROUS



## U.S. Mothers Concerned That Direct-to-Consumer Spirits Shipping Is Dangerous

*New study from WSWA Educational Foundation in partnership with Morning Consult finds potential for increased underage access, DUIs, and dangerous product a serious concern for moms and Direct-to-Consumer (DTC) Spirits Shipping*

**MOMS AGREE:** Preventing underage access should be at the forefront of any new laws or regulations in the alcohol marketplace, including DTC spirits shipping



**91% OF U.S. MOMS** agree that preventing underage drinking is important for lawmakers to consider when making new alcohol laws and regulations.



**73% OF U.S. MOMS** agree that preventing underage drinking is extremely important for lawmakers to consider when making new alcohol laws and regulations.



**72% OF U.S. MOMS** are concerned that DTC spirits shipping will increase underage access to alcohol.

**MOMS KNOW:** The three-tier system keeps Americans safe

**3X**

**MORE LIKELY**

U.S. moms are three times more likely to say that the current three-tier system is working well than not.

**78% OF U.S. MOMS**

recognize the important role Americans, family-owned wine & spirits wholesalers play in the alcohol supply chain.



**61% OF U.S. MOMS**

are concerned that DTC spirits shipping across state lines will increase access to dangerous counterfeit products.



**A UNITED FRONT:** Despite geographic, cultural, and partisan differences, moms in New York and Texas agree

Preventing underage access is important for lawmakers to consider when deciding alcohol laws and regulations like DTC spirits shipping privileges:



Mothers are concerned that the DTC shipping of spirits across state lines will lead to increased underage access:



Mothers are concerned that the DTC shipping of spirits across state lines will lead to increased access to dangerous counterfeit products:



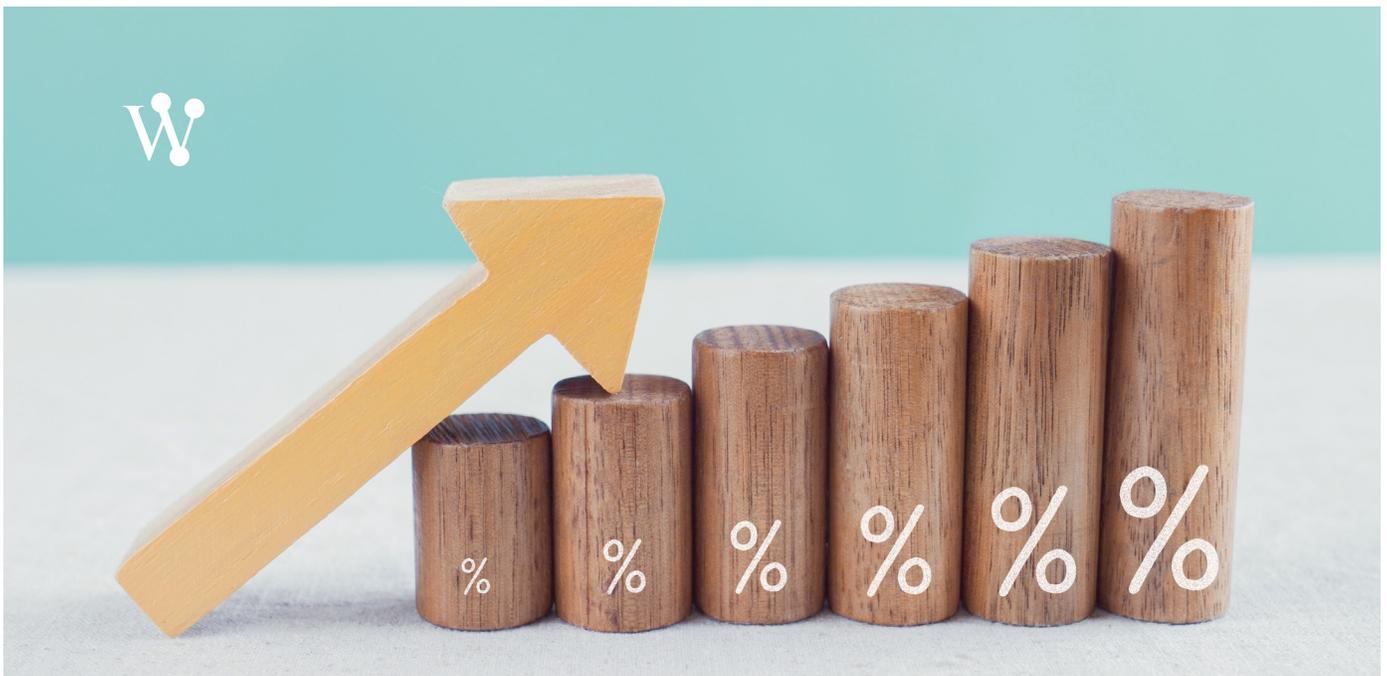
## Industry Economic Impact Data

WSWA works in collaboration with a **dedicated economic firm** to develop and maintain **macroeconomics** and **microeconomic** impact models in all 50 states and nationally. This partnership also allows WSWA to **create legislative economic reports** that illustrate the effects of a specific bill's passage.

### Economic Analysis and Deliverables

- **Value of wholesalers:** Our economic analyses evaluate the true value of wholesalers and the benefit they provide local communities, business owners, individuals, and states.
- **Jobs created and income generated:** Focusing on local impact, our economic analyses illustrate the importance of wholesalers and the wine and spirits industry in generating jobs and income for employees in each state.
- **Tax revenue:** Tax revenues from the wine and spirits industry are compiled and examined for all 50 states, demonstrating the importance of this industry nationwide.
- **Public-facing reports:** Economic analysis and forecasts are packaged in clear, convincing, and easy-to-follow one-pagers that highlight pertinent information and data.

Learn more at [www.wswa.org/data-and-impact/economic-database](http://www.wswa.org/data-and-impact/economic-database).





# WSWA's State Law Database

## What is it?

WSWA maintains a **national online database** that captures **state alcohol laws** and **regulations** important to wholesalers. This site contains **over 6,000 data points** and is searchable by any combination of states and issues to provide customizable searches.

The WSWA State Law Database is updated annually and available to all WSWA wholesaler members. WSWA's Legal and Regulatory Team also **reviews all enacted alcohol legislation** and makes over 100 updates to the WSWA State Law Database on an annual basis.

## Example issues contained in the database:

- On- and off-premise curbside and delivery sales.
- Ready-to-drink (RTD) cocktails
- Consumer sampling
- Pricing
- Wholesale licenses and fees
- Point-of-sale advertising materials
- Coupons
- And much more

STATE LAW DATABASE

FIND ALCOHOL LAWS AND REGULATIONS BY STATE

[Subscription and Pricing Information](#) | [Contact Us](#)

Find by State

Find by Issue

Keyword Search **Search**

This database is provided as an informational aid and is not legal advice. Data may be out-of-date or incomplete. Please consult a lawyer before taking any action.

## Women in Leadership (WIL) Executive Education Program

*"If opportunity doesn't knock, build a door."*

— Milton Berle

Each spring, WSWA hosts an **executive education program** for women leaders of wine and spirits wholesale member companies. This program is a **hybrid format** with three weeks of classes being conducted virtually and the final capstone class held in person in Washington, D.C. At this culminating event, participants get a **certificate of completion** and a celebratory reception honoring the graduating class. Facilitators and guest speakers are recruited from the prestigious **Columbia University Business School**.

**How it started:** The Women in Leadership (WIL) Executive Education Program began in 2019 when data from the **Women in the Workplace study** conducted by McKinsey and LeanIn.org pointed to the **lack of women leaders in wholesaler businesses**. Investment became a key factor in creating a program for high potential wholesaler women leaders.

"This program has been truly inspirational," said Rachel Evans, National Account Manager for Wine & Spirits at Columbia Distributing. "The content shared, and relationships are invaluable, and I am emerging from this program stronger and more motivated to continue to grow and positively impact the wine and spirits Industry fueled by the support of this WIL group!"

To date, **88 women have participated** in this program, with a **95%** retention rate through investment in their growth, leadership and elevated talent.



## WSWA Access Craft Wine & Spirits



### Did you know

WSWA is on a mission to develop and work closely with craft, startup and small-production wine and spirits brands by providing expert guidance, resources and best practices that help labels navigate industry challenges and identify opportunities? WSWA's Access Craft Wine and Spirits is dedicated to helping craft brands thrive in the world's most diverse alcohol marketplace.

The Access Craft Advisory Council brings together a team of Wholesaler Advisors, Brand Representatives, and Industry Partners to provide expert guidance and develop resources made by industry thought leaders for industry disruptors:

- Download the industry's first, comprehensive Distribution Playbook with trade insights from leading craft brand experts. This free, 84-page resource is filled with best practices for developing business plans, crafting marketing approaches and building sustainable growth strategies that attract distributors and drive brand growth.
- Find hours of public, in-depth webinars focused on topics like "Distribution & Scalability," "Digital Marketing for Success," "What Goes Into a Label?" and more at [www.wswa.org/accesscraft](http://www.wswa.org/accesscraft).

## Educational Programming Through Webinars

WSWA webinars provide members and industry partners with informative, timely and tailored content. All WSWA wholesaler members and their staff are welcome to attend!

### Current Series:

- **WSWA Access: Growth Education:** Expert guidance, resources and best practices for small-production wine and spirits brands as they navigate industry challenges and opportunities by providing influential and unique virtual education.
- **WSWA Presents: Industry-wide Timely Topics:** Programming around timely topics that puts WSWA and its members on the forefront of key issues by bringing thought leadership to all tiers of our industry.
- **Chairman's Spotlight: Executive Industry Updates:** A platform to present updates about threats, challenges and opportunities to distributors, providing thought leadership from the highest level of wholesale decision-makers.
- **Leadership Development Series: NextGen Education Curated by the CLD and WLC:** Premiere executive education that elevates and empowers the current and next-generation industry leaders, executives and members.

### Past Webinar Topics:

- Consumer Resilience in Alcohol
- Getting Craft Brands to Market
- Anatomy of an Import
- And much more!



## The Impact of Associate Partnerships

**Associate member:** *noun:* a **trusted partner** with mutual understanding and collaboration to grow and support the industry.

### Did you know?

WSWA has an average of 80 partners through our associate membership category. Associate member companies range from small and large producers to craft brands, service providers to industry vendors — all connected to the wholesale tier through membership. Did you also know WSWA has a **dedicated webpage** highlighting all their associate members?

Established partners and new partnerships provide great value and benefits such as solution-driven technology, more informed wholesale employees, and a one-stop shop to all brands looking for distributor solutions in the marketplace.

### What else do associate members provide?

Our associate members also bring to the table a wealth of **industry knowledge**, the latest beverage alcohol **trends, guidance** on brand development to increase sales, **unique services** to improve efficiency, **sponsorships** and **enhanced connections** between the tiers.

### Where can you meet with associate partners?

Most of our associate members participate in Access LIVE, WSWA's newly re-branded convention. They serve as exhibitors, sponsors of our meetings and thought leaders in the beverage alcohol space.





# Sponsorship Engagement

## Did you know?

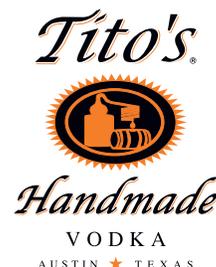
WSWA has a robust and **active sponsorship program** that continues to grow year after year. This program offers a multitude of **high-value engagement options** for sponsors at any level.

### Sponsors currently participate in support of the following:

- Access LIVE (formerly WSWA Convention & Exposition)
- Council for Leadership Development (CLD) Conference
- NextGen Leaders Summit
- Women’s Leadership Council (WLC) Conference
- Virtual programming/webinars
- Access Craft Playbook

Benefits to sponsors include **brand exposure, thought leadership** through speaking opportunities, **access to industry leaders** and lead generation — just to name a few. Long-term partners find great value in showing goodwill and support through their generous sponsorships.

### Here are some of WSWA’s key sponsors:



Through WSWA’s meetings and events, members utilize networking opportunities to engage with sponsors, source potential new vendors and build upon existing partnerships.



# WSWA Councils

One of WSWA’s most valuable assets is having members who are willing to **engage at all levels** within the association through voluntary, knowledge-sharing councils. These councils are a response to an ever-changing industry and marketplace to ensure we are aligned in how we react to and **advocate on issues**, how we **improve our business acumen**, how we **stay competitive in the marketplace** and how we provide avenues for employees to serve as thought leaders within their own roles.

**WSWA councils fall into two categories: councils by appointment and council by application:**

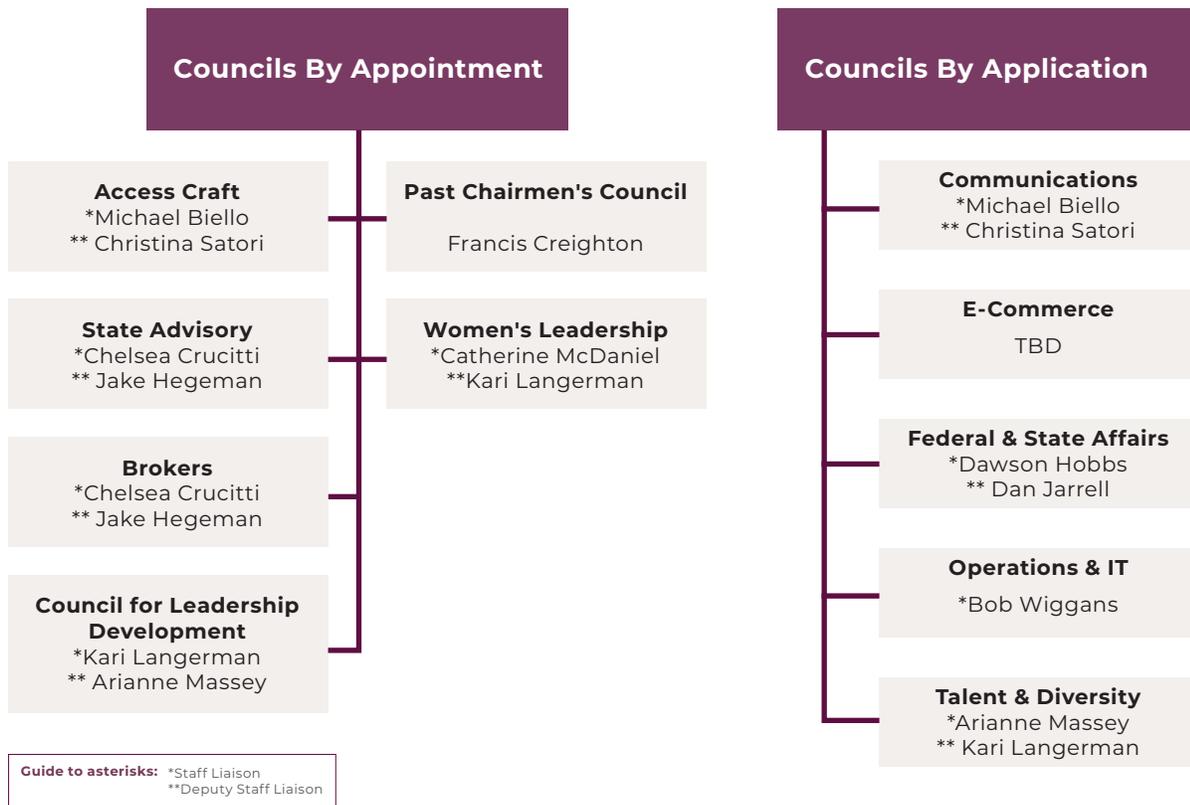
**Councils by Appointment**

- Access Craft
- Broker’s Council
- Council for Leadership Development (CLD)
- Past Chairmen’s Council
- Women’s Leadership Council (WLC)

**Council by Application**

- Communications
- E-Commerce
- Federal Affairs
- Operations & IT
- State Affairs
- Talent Development & Diversity

Each council has a chair and vice chair that rotate from year to year. These groups provides excellent opportunities to connect with peers in the industry, share market trends, solve problems and unite to serve our industry.





## Operations and IT Council

**WSWA's Operations and IT Council** provides a forum to educate member companies on **new technological advancements** and industry best practices in warehouse logistics, enterprise resource planning systems, business intelligence, supply chain management, cybersecurity and privacy, energy savings and sustainability, and other areas to overcome day-to-day logistical challenges and advance the success and dynamism of their businesses.

### Objectives and Priorities

- Discuss **current operational challenges** and how emerging technologies and trends in digital and smart distribution may help overcome those obstacles.
- Explore how to **implement new technologies** to improve the efficiency and productivity of member businesses.
- Determine how to bring the benefits of innovative technologies and **data to the distribution tier**.
- Promote **sustainability efforts** within the wholesale tier and partnerships with suppliers and

### Council Operations

- The council meets quarterly for 90 minutes.
- Each council member will be responsible for sharing knowledge of key challenges and best practices to help advance operations and IT development.

Previous discussion topics include:

#### Emerging Technologies

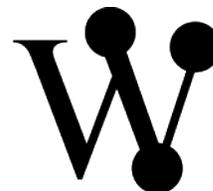
- Visualization (GoSpotCheck)
- Paperless invoicing (Inventiv/Netsuite)
- Universal item ID (BIECC Master Product Catalog)

#### Labor and Supply Chain

- COVID response
- COVID protocols
- Supply chain constraints (Wine & Spirits Shippers Association)

### Cybersecurity

- Wholesalers' experiences
- Cybersecurity and Infrastructure Security Agency (CISA)
- **Cybersecurity Resource Center**



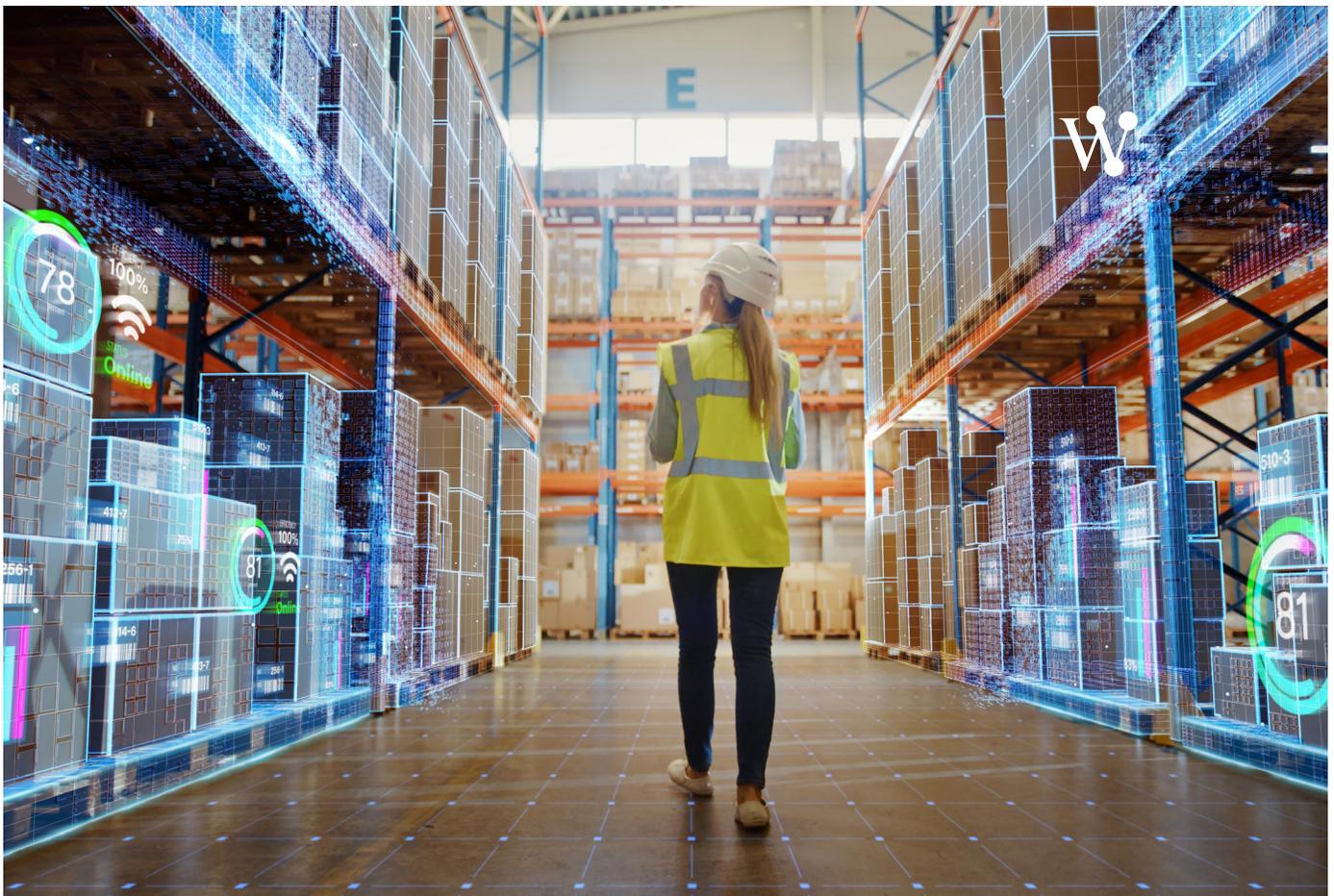
## WSWA E-Commerce Council

### What is it?

WSWA understands the need for wholesalers to be on the **forefront of technology and e-commerce**. E-commerce is evolving quickly, and the changes that happen for other fast-moving consumer goods greatly influence the beverage alcohol industry.

To keep up with developments in our industry, WSWA has its E-commerce Council that meets at least **every quarter** to discuss the changes we see and to hear from the e-commerce companies that are innovating in our industry. Recent speakers have included e-commerce specialists from **GoPuff, Pepsi, UberEats and City Hive**, to name a few.

Keeping on top of e-commerce progress is one goal, but helping members with their e-commerce needs is another. Accordingly, WSWA is also **exploring opportunities to create solutions** that our members can benefit from on the business-to-business front.





## WSWA Cannabis Task Force

The WSWA Cannabis Task Force establishes areas of involvement for the association regarding **cannabis policy and regulation** at both the federal and state levels.

### The objectives and priorities of the task force include:

- Identifying emerging issues related to cannabis legalization, licensure, regulation and control that the WSWA membership needs to be aware of.
- Educating each other on the current cannabis landscape at the federal and state levels, with an eye toward how to enlighten WSA members about cannabis-related topics.
- Determining potential outcomes, in both the near term and the long range, and how the WSWA membership could be affected.
- Developing sound strategies for engagement and advocacy.

### Principles for Federal Oversight of the Adult-Use Cannabis Supply Chain

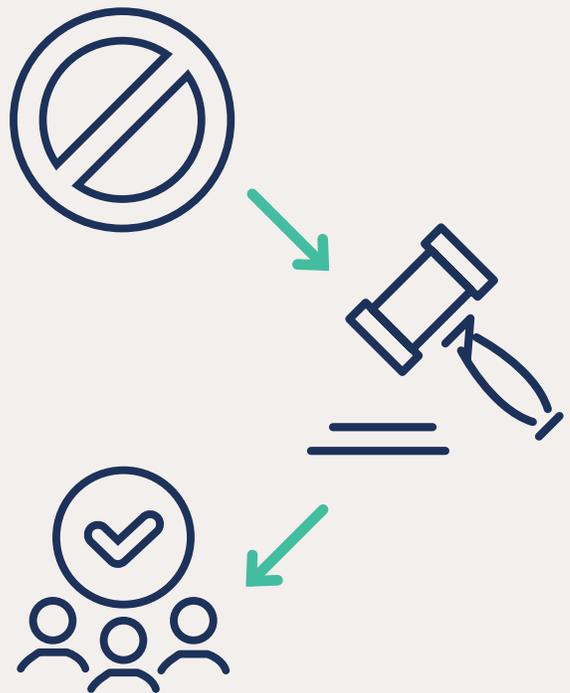
WSWA believes the federal government should respect the rights of states to establish a safe and well-regulated cannabis marketplace.

WSWA has developed policy principles for the federal regulation of cannabis. The principles are based on the federal regulations that govern alcohol, focusing on the licensing of producers and distributors, proper labeling and testing

of products, efficient tax collection, and measures to ensure public health and safety.

Core to these principles is the belief that all businesses engaged in the production and interstate transport of cannabis should be federally regulated. All cannabis products should be tested and taxed, and states should have the authority to enact stronger measures within their borders.

**The transition from Prohibition to legal status for alcohol has been an American success story.**



## Government Affairs Council



WSWA's Government Affairs Council provides updates regarding important **federal and state** legislation, regulations, and **litigation** around the country that has the potential to impact wholesaler member companies.

Open to all members, the Government Affairs Council is a valuable venue to learn about **emerging issues** and get the latest updates on pending priority legislation, **such as business tax reform, DTC shipping, impaired driving, cannabis policy, the no- and low-alcohol movement, the rise of RTD legislation, and supply chain challenges and operational issues such as shelf pricing, product shortages, and potential retaliatory tariffs.**

Government Affairs Council members also hear from guest speakers on important issues impacting the daily operations of wholesalers. Past presenters and panelists have included the chief economist of the American Trucking Association, a supply chain logistics specialist from TranzAct, and the director of the Wine & Spirits Shippers Association, among others.

The Government Affairs Council meets once a month via conference calls during federal and state legislative sessions and on an ad hoc basis when a pressing issue emerges.

# Talent Development and Diversity Council

## What is it?

WSWA's Talent Development and Diversity Council is comprised of company leaders, human resource professionals, and other diversity specialists across wholesaler member organizations. The primary goal of **this organization is to understand the talent challenges and be a resource and an advocate** for the value of **diversity and inclusion** within member companies and our industry. We also work to assist our companies in **attracting new talent** and maximizing the talents and skills of current employees.

## Key objectives and priorities include:

- Identifying key talent and diversity challenges across wholesaler organizations.
- Sharing knowledge of key challenges and/or best practices that help advance talent development and diversity.
- Bring in experts to share knowledge, initiatives and best practices with council members, who then take that knowledge back to their organizations.
- Serve as a resource to enhance employee awareness and build understanding of the importance and value of diversity and inclusion in our workforce.
- The council meets four times a year via conference call as well as virtually throughout the year based on priorities and key initiatives.





## Access LIVE Task Force

### What is it?

The Access LIVE Task Force was created in 2022 to act as an advisory board to the WSWA Meetings & Conventions Team, planning the reimagined event: Access LIVE. This group will provide guidance and input on plans the WSWA team has made as well as suggestions on what can be added or modified to improve the new event.

The Access LIVE Task Force will not only help ensure the designed event meets a variety of stakeholder needs but also serve as ambassadors for the new event and help to promote Access LIVE across the industry.

This task force will have monthly virtual meetings leading up to 2023 Access LIVE.

### Who comprises the Task Force?

This group is comprised of 15 wholesaler member representatives representing a variety of member companies from large multi-state organizations to single-state companies. The members invited to be a part of the task force have a diverse background in experiences, ownership and non-ownership status, varied lengths of time within the industry and leadership levels.

If you are interested in learning more about the Access LIVE Task Force, please contact WSWA's Vice President of Meetings & Conventions, Kari Langerman ([kari@wswa.org](mailto:kari@wswa.org)).



## WSWA Brokers Council

### What is it?

WSWA's Brokers Council provides a special forum for WSWA members who operate in control states to discuss pending legislation as well as challenges and opportunities unique to brokers.

The council members also help **educate** WSWA on brokerage operations to **enhance WSWA's advocacy on laws and regulations** impacting brokerage operations.

The council provides a **valuable forum** for members to discuss advocacy and successful strategies and make advocacy resources and talking point recommendations to WSWA.

One of the main objectives of the Brokers Council has been to **strengthen** dialogue with the **National Alcohol Beverage Control Association (NABCA)** and **integrate** brokers onto more NABCA conference panels.

The Brokers Council **meets quarterly** throughout the year via conference call.

