



Tennessee: Don't Let Lawmakers Take Your Wine Choices Away

Free the Grapes! Urges Volunteer State Wine Lovers to Make Voices Heard

February 25, 2021, Napa, CA – Free the Grapes!, a national coalition of wineries and wine lovers, is calling on consumers in the Volunteer State to write their state legislators in opposition to bills that would, if passed, effectively cut off Tennessee adult wine lovers' ability to purchase and receive wines directly from their favorite wineries. <https://freethegrapes.org>

House Bill 742 and its companion Senate Bill 705 would ban winery shipments to Tennessee residents that move through a fulfillment house. Fulfillment houses play an important role helping small and medium size wineries warehouse, package and arrange for shipping through common carriers, like UPS and Tennessee's own FedEx. If these bills pass, they will shut off an estimated 60% of winery direct-to-consumer (DTC) shipments to the state. No other state has an affirmative ban on shipments through fulfillment houses.

"These bills are anti-consumer, anti-free trade, and will reduce state tax collections," said Jeremy Benson, executive director of Free the Grapes! "Direct to consumer (DTC) shipping laws passed over a decade ago give Tennessee consumers options to order a limited amount of wine directly from U.S. wineries licensed by the state. This bill would take the Volunteer State backward."

The bills are also opposed by Tennessee wineries. Tennessee Farm Winegrowers Alliance executive director Adam Acampora says, "We believe limiting consumer choice is in direct opposition to the free and open market that the Tennessee legislature rightly touts. The bills' broad language would also detrimentally effect how some of our wineries and farm wineries operate within the state."

Tennessee consumers can visit [FreeththeGrapes.org](https://freethegrapes.org) to learn more about the bill and compose a message to state legislators sent automatically through the website.

Winery Direct to consumer wine sales fill in the gaps where the traditional three tier channel – shipments from winery to wholesaler to retailer – does not adequately meet consumer demand. The number of U.S. wineries has increased by over 500% to more than 10,000 in the past 30 years – there is at least one winery in every state. But U.S. wineries produce thousands of new wines each vintage, and nearly all wineries are small, family-owned and operated producers relying to some degree on DTC shipping to the 46 states that allow it.

About Free the Grapes!

Founded in 1998, Free the Grapes! is a national movement of consumers and wineries seeking to expand consumer choice in wine with legal, regulated DTC shipments. <https://freethegrapes.org>

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