



DATE: March 17, 2026

TO: Members, Minnesota House of Representatives Commerce Finance and Policy Committee

Dear Legislators:

The Minnesota Licensed Beverage Association (MLBA) represents Minnesota's small, family-owned liquor retailers, including both on-sale establishments (bars and restaurants) and off-sale retailers (liquor stores) across the state.

We are writing to respectfully oppose House File 901 (Kresha), which would allow the transfer unlimited amounts of wine between commonly owned liquor stores.

This proposal may appear narrow, but in practice it would create a significant competitive disadvantage for independent liquor retailers across Minnesota. Allowing retailers to move product from one store to another opens the door for large chain retailers to effectively operate centralized warehousing systems, undermining Minnesota's long-standing three-tier alcohol distribution system and creating an uneven playing field in the marketplace.

Most independent retailers do not have the purchasing power or infrastructure of national chains. According to industry data, the average Minnesota liquor store sells fewer than **40 cases of wine per week**, while a large independent store may sell over **80 cases per week**. By contrast, a typical Total Wine location in Minnesota sells approximately **1,200 cases of wine each week** and already benefits from sophisticated inventory systems and bulk purchasing advantages. Allowing product transfers between commonly owned stores would further amplify that advantage, effectively giving large chain retailers an additional tool that smaller businesses simply cannot match.

In addition to being unfair, **this proposal is also unnecessary. If a retailer has excess inventory, the traditional and time-tested solution is to offer promotions or sales to move product—which is something independent retailers do every day.** Creating a new system that allows inter-store transfers is not needed and primarily benefits large chain operations rather than Minnesota's locally owned businesses.

For these reasons, MLBA urges legislators to **oppose House File 901** and maintain a fair, competitive marketplace for Minnesota's small and independent liquor retailers.

Sincerely,

Tony Chesak
Executive Director

Minnesota Licensed Beverage Association