



101-17220 Stony Plain Road
Edmonton, AB T5S 1K6

October 12th, 2017

The Honorable Bill Walker

Office of the Governor

550 West 7th Avenue, #1700

Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Dear Governor Walker:

On behalf of Liquor Stores N.A. and all of our 160 employees at our Brown Jug locations in Alaska, we are writing to support the shoplifting provisions of SB 54 during the upcoming special session of the Legislature. These are important fixes to inadvertent consequences of SB 91 from 2016.

As a business with retail outlets in several regions across Alaska, Brown Jug's liquor stores have experienced an increase in theft since the passage of Senate Bill 91 last year. In addition, our store clerks have been subjected to escalations in brazen behavior by shoplifters, who rather than try to conceal or hide items they are stealing, flaunt it at clerks on their way out the door and some have gone as far as making comments about the "laws have changed."

Our own data shows that the shrink % since passage of Senate Bill 91 (July, 2016 to Aug, 2017), for our Anchorage stores, is as follows:

- Internal theft is up 88%
- Robbery is even YTD
- Shoplifting is up 84%
- Shoplifting \$ amount is up 96.7%

As you can see the up-tick has been substantive as it pertains to internal theft and shop-lifting incidences, not to mention the dollar value associated with those shoplifting encounters, which leads us to believe that the repeat offenders are getting more brazen, thus taking more expensive products.

Alcohol is a product subject to strict legal and regulatory sale and distribution requirements for various important reasons, including age requirements and strict identification checks. Yet, when certain individuals feel emboldened to bypass that system by grabbing alcohol off the shelves and walking out the door, that entire system is bypassed and alcohol can end up in the hands of those it is designed to restrict.

During this increase in theft, our store personnel have found law enforcement increasingly reluctant to make arrests, even when given compelling evidence including photos of those perpetrating these crimes. Regardless of whether this increase in brazen theft is completely a result of the provisions of Senate Bill 91, court rule changes, or law enforcement budgets, perception on the streets is that the bar has been lowered for these crimes.

Senate Bill 54 makes important clarifications which are an important step in addressing this situation. We encourage the House to take action and pass this important bill during the fall 2017 Special Legislative session.

Sincerely,

Gerald Proctor *Vice President, Government & Community Affairs*

Liquor Stores NA

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Cc: Attorney General Jahna Lindemouth

Alaska Legislature

NFIB

The Voice of Small Business.®

ALASKA

October 12, 2017

The Honorable Bill Walker
Governor of Alaska
State Capitol Building
Juneau, Alaska 99801-1182

RE: Senate Bill 54

Dear Governor Walker:

On behalf of the National Federation of Independent Business/Alaska, I wish to respectfully share our support for Senate Bill 54 and appreciation that you put it on the Special Session Call. The National Federation of Independent Business is the largest small-business advocacy group in Alaska. NFIB believes it is critically important that this bill pass this year.

SB 54 addresses the need to provide the criminal justice system the means to encourage violators to enter treatment to address the many issues driving them to violate our laws. Our members are experiencing substantially more theft by these same people as a result of the lack of tools our police have to deal with petty theft.

Senate Bill 54 corrects unintentional problems caused by the passage and interpretation of Senate Bill 91 passed by the legislature in 2016. It addresses penalties for 4th degree theft, class A-misdemeanors, and class C-felonies. SB 54, for the most part, reflects recommended changes from the Alaska Criminal Justice Commission.

While SB 54 may not resolve all concerns with SB 91, it is important to, at least, take this modest step now. We believe the changes in SB 54 will help deter misdemeanor crime and provide enforcement agencies the tools to help reduce criminal activity.

Sincerely yours,



Dennis L. DeWitt
Alaska State Director

Cc: NFIB/AK Leadership Council
Members of the Alaska House of Representatives



October 18, 2017

Dear Anchorage Legislators:

The Anchorage Chamber of Commerce (ACC) business members have expressed their concerns regarding the increase in property crime, auto theft, and other serious offenses throughout Anchorage and Alaska. After review by our organization's Legislative and Executive Committees, the ACC urges passage of SB54. This measure adds penalties and consequences to these crimes, along with stricter punishment for parole violations.

The Anchorage Chamber believes that passing SB54, in its current form, is a necessary and much needed step to increase public safety in our city and state. It gives courts more discretion to tailor appropriate sentences for repeat theft offenders and first time Class C felonies. The measure also returns violating a 'condition of release' to a crime punishable by jail time. We believe that these changes will help to deter offenders and reduce crime.

SB54 responds to the concerns voiced daily by our citizens. In our review of the measure, we heard presentations by State Representatives, former prosecutors, and members of the Anchorage Police Department.

Public safety is top of mind for all citizens of Anchorage, and SB54 is a step in stemming crime. As such, we support its passage.

Regards,

Bruce Bustamante

President