



THE STATE
of **ALASKA**
GOVERNOR MICHAEL J. DUNLEAVY

Department of Commerce, Community,
and Economic Development

ALCOHOL AND MARIJUANA CONTROL OFFICE
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February 18, 2019

The Honorable Peter Micciche
State Capitol Room 504
Juneau, AK 99801

Re: Senate Bill 52, Title 4 Rewrite

Dear Senator Micciche:

Six years ago, representatives from a broad spectrum of Alaska society came together to discuss updating and reforming our state's alcohol laws. The stakeholder group, which we convened, included representatives from the alcohol industry, public health, local governments, law enforcement and public safety, education, and community advocacy. Five subcommittees were created to drill down into specific topics: Licensing, the Role of the ABC Board, Underage Drinking, Local Option, and Internet Sales of Alcohol. Hundreds of people spent thousands of hours discussing and debating the major issues as well as the finer points of liquor licensing and enforcement. A bill was developed that reflects recommendations as well as compromises to update and modernize our alcohol laws in Title 4.

Last session, Senate Bill 76 passed the Senate but did not make it through its assigned committees in the House. The bill failed because there are tensions and disagreements in the alcohol industry, as in any industry. The stakeholder group and the industry continue to meet to work on contentious issues. In the meantime, Senator Micciche, not wanting to waste years of work and compromise, has again introduced the rewrite legislation in Senate Bill 52.

The Board does not take a position on tensions between the various business types within the industry. However, the Board is committed to the goals of the Title 4 rewrite, which are these:

- Promote a fair business climate and protect public health and safety by
 - Creating rational regulation for all tiers of the alcohol industry;
 - Limiting youth access to alcohol, while ensuring youth are not criminalized; and
 - Promoting responsible alcohol use and reducing the harms of overconsumption.
- Make Title 4 a clear and consistent legal framework, to include
 - Increasing the swiftness, proportionality, and consistency of penalties;
 - Increasing local law enforcement of Title 4; and
 - Increasing licensee accountability before the ABC Board for Title 4 violations.

This is the first comprehensive look at Title 4 in over 30 years. This rewrite will update outdated provisions, correct conflicting and confusing provisions, modernize laws to reflect current trends and values, help the Board carry out its mission, and benefit communities and businesses.