

MAINE STATE LEGISLATURE

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132nd MAINE LEGISLATURE

FIRST SPECIAL SESSION-2025

Legislative Document

No. 1376

S.P. 570

In Senate, April 1, 2025

An Act to Increase the Acceptable Level of Alcohol in a Low-alcohol Spirits Product and to Increase Availability of Those Products

Received by the Secretary of the Senate on March 28, 2025. Referred to the Committee on Veterans and Legal Affairs pursuant to Joint Rule 308.2 and ordered printed.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "D M Grant", is positioned above the printed name of the Secretary of the Senate.

DAREK M. GRANT
Secretary of the Senate

Presented by Senator HICKMAN of Kennebec.

Be it enacted by the People of the State of Maine as follows:

Sec. 1. 28-A MRSA §2, sub-§16-A, as amended by PL 2021, c. 658, §18, is further amended to read:

16-A. Low-alcohol spirits product. "Low-alcohol spirits product" means a product containing spirits that has more than 1/2 of 1% of alcohol by volume but no more than ~~8%~~ 15% of alcohol by volume. Beginning July 1, 2019, "low-alcohol spirits product" does not mean a flavoring, such as an extract or concentrate, added to a malt beverage or wine that:

A. May or may not contain alcohol;

B. Is not intended to be consumed alone as a beverage or a food product but serves as a flavor enhancement to a beverage or a food product; and

C. Is not, prior to being added to a malt beverage or wine, subject to excise tax under chapter 65.

Sec. 2. 28-A MRSA §13, as repealed and replaced by PL 2021, c. 658, §49, is amended to read:

§13. Low-alcohol spirits products sold by malt liquor or wine licensees

1. Retail sales. Notwithstanding any provision of this Title to the contrary, a person licensed to sell malt liquor or wine for on-premises or off-premises consumption may also sell low-alcohol spirits products. All provisions of this Title applicable to malt liquor or wine, except chapters 65 and 67, apply to low-alcohol spirits products when sold by persons licensed to sell malt liquor or wine for on-premises or off-premises consumption.

2. Wholesale sales. Notwithstanding any provision of this Title to the contrary, a person licensed under section 1401 as an in-state wholesaler of malt liquor or wine may also sell and distribute low-alcohol spirits products.

SUMMARY

This bill amends the definition of "low-alcohol spirits products" for the laws regarding liquor by raising the maximum level of alcohol by volume of a low-alcohol spirits product from 8% to 15%. The bill also provides that a low-alcohol spirits product may be sold by a person licensed to sell malt liquor for on-premises and off-premises consumption. It authorizes in-state wholesalers of malt liquor to sell and distribute low-alcohol spirits products.