

1st Quarter, 2026

PROOF

THE MAGAZINE FOR MINNESOTA'S LICENSED BEVERAGE RETAILERS

HOW GRD IS DEFINING THE FUTURE OF HEMP-DERIVED BEVERAGES





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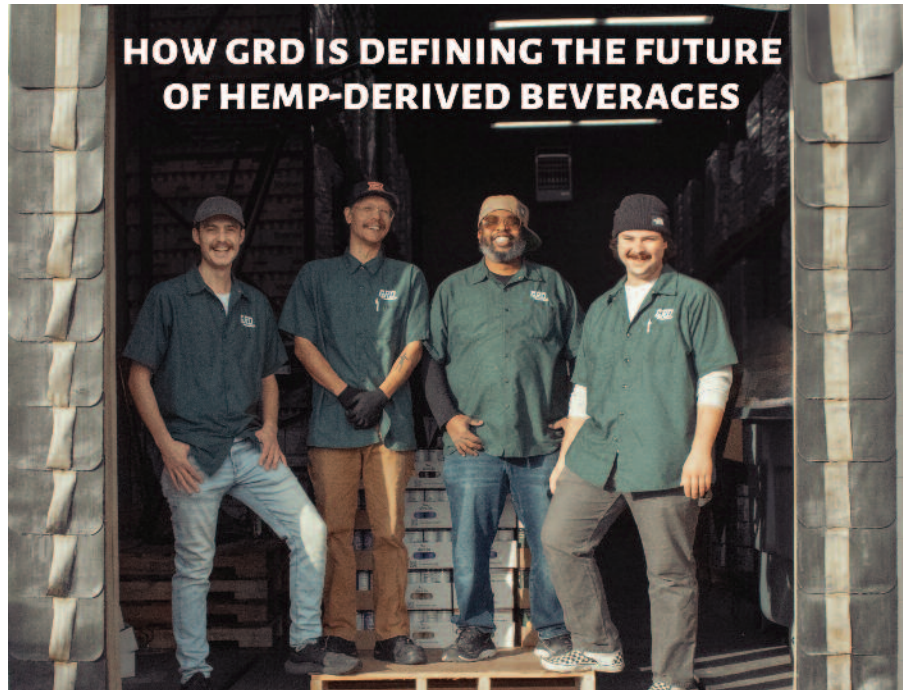
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The Best Argument Against 'Wine in Grocery' . . . They Already Have Full Strength Alcohol Today!!

It is time to print our updated list of Grocery, Convenience and Big-Box stores in Minnesota that have wine, strong beer and spirits in a **legal but separate store**.

When MLBA first compiled this list in the Jan-Feb 2007 issue of PROOF Magazine, there were around 70 liquor stores owned by grocery stores, convenience and warehouse store chains. As of January 31, 2026, there are at least **223** that have separate full strength beer, wine and spirits stores.

They all have the same hours of operation; the same age restrictions; the same liquor license fees that private and municipal liquor stores have. If connected to the main store, they also must have a separate entrance and separate check-out from the grocery store - or what is known as the 3-door (*common vestibule with separate entrances to the liquor store*

and main store.)

The growing list of 223 big-box, grocery and convenience owned full-strength liquor stores listed below represent over 200% increase in just the last 18 years. It is undeniable proof that we can all be in business together with no new laws and a strong "three-tier" system of manufacturers, distributors and retailers.

These liquor stores have proved that **no new laws are needed that would greatly increase the number of outlets for alcohol in Minnesota**. MLBA fully supports these liquor operations. Several of these liquor stores are MLBA members taking advantage of what MLBA has to offer like alcohol server training, insurance discounts, labor law poster compliance, music licensing discounts and many more!

Big Box, Grocery and Convenience Store Owned Full Liquor Stores in MN (as of January, 2026)

Andy's Liquors Rochester (5): (*Coborn's owned*) Broadway, Central, Marketplace, Northeast, Northwest

Brother's Market Inc. (4): (*Sister's Beer, Wine & Spirits*), Alexandria, Barrett, Elbow Lake, Sauk Center

Casey's Retail Co. (2): Brainerd (2) (*Casey's Gen. Store, Goodstop*)

Cash Wise Liquor (11): Alexandria, Baxter, Brainerd, Duluth, Moorhead, New Ulm, Owatonna, St. Michael, Waite Park, Waseca, Willmar

Coborn's Liquor (14): Albertville, Belle Plaine, Clearwater, Foley, Hastings, Little Falls, Melrose, New Prague, Otsego, Plymouth, Ramsey, St. Cloud, St. Joseph, Sartell

Costco Wholesale (12): Baxter, Burnsville, Chaska, Coon Rapids, Duluth, Eagan, Maple Grove, Maplewood, Rochester, St. Cloud, St. Louis Park, Woodbury

Cub Liquors and Wine & Spirits (29): Arden Hills, Bloomington East, Bloomington West, Brooklyn Park, Burnsville, Champlin, Coon Rapids, Crystal, Eagan, Hastings, Inver Grove Hts, Mankato, Maple Grove, Maplewood, Oakdale, Plymouth, Rochester, Rosemount, Roseville, St. Louis Park, St. Michael, St. Paul, Shakopee, Stillwater, West St. Paul, White Bear Lake, WBL Township, Willmar, Woodbury

CVS Pharmacy (1): Dilworth

EconoFoods (1): Breckenridge

Edwards Oil Co. (3): (*Little Brown Jug*) Biwabik, Nashwauk, Int'l Falls

Fareway Spirits & More (4): Byron, Faribault, Owatonna, Stewartville

Holiday Stationstores (2): Medina (*Hwy 55 Liq.*), Hastings (*Point Liquor*) -

Hy-Vee Wine & Spirits (19): Albert Lea, Austin, Brooklyn Pk, Cottage Grove, Eagan, Faribault, Mankato, Maplewood, Maple Grove, New Hope, New Prague, New Ulm, Oakdale, Owatonna, Plymouth, Rochester, Shakopee, Spring Lake Park, Winona

Kowalski's (6): Excelsior, Minneapolis, Oak Park Hts, St Paul, Shoreview, Woodbury

Kwik Trip (5): Byron, Owatonna, Rice Lake, Rush City, Scanlon

Lake City Fresh Market (1): Lake City

Lake Country Foods (1): Emily

Lunds & Byerly's Wine & Spirits (11) Burnsville, Chanhassen, Eagan, Golden Valley, Maple Grove, Minneapolis, Minnetonka, Plymouth, St. Louis Park, White Bear Lake, Woodbury

Market Wine & Spirits (1): St. Peter

Midtown Market Wine & Spirits (1): Winona

On the Rocks (2): Hugo (*Festival Foods*), Lake Crystal (*Kevin's Foods*)

Orton's Oil Co. (1): Audubon

Rahn's Oil & Propane (4): Cushing, Henning, Melrose, St. Stephen

Sam's Club (10): Bloomington, Eagan, Hermantown, Mankato, Maple Grove, Rochester, St. Cloud, Shakopee, White Bear Lake, Woodbury

Super One Liquors (10): Baxter, Cloquet, Crosby, Duluth, Pike Lake (Duluth), Grand Rapids, Hibbing, Int'l Falls, Virginia, Walker

Super Spirits (Speedway) (3): Foley, Pequot Lakes, St Cloud.

SuperMarket Foods (2): Karlstad, Warren

Target (23): Blaine, Burnsville, Champlin, Chanhassen, Chaska, Coon Rapids, Duluth, Lino Lakes, Maple Grove, Medina, Minneapolis, N. St. Paul, Otsego, Plymouth, Rochester, Roseville, St. Louis Park, St. Paul, Shoreview, Vadnais Hts, Waconia, W. St. Paul, Woodbury

Teal's Markets (3): Albany, Cold Spring, Spicer

Trader Joe's (10), Bloomington, Eagan, Maple Grove, Minneapolis, Minnetonka, Rochester, St. Louis Park, St. Paul, Shoreview, Woodbury

Wal-Mart (17): Austin, Baxter, Cloquet, Cottage Grove, Dilworth, Faribault, Gr Rapids, Hastings, Little Falls, Mountain Iron, New Ulm, Oak Pk Hts, Rochester, St. Cloud, Sauk Centre, Waseca, Willmar

Walgreens (1): Mankato

Whole Foods Market (3): Maple Grove, Minneapolis, Woodbury

Zups Food Market (1): Ely

Save Legal Hemp-Derived THC Edibles & Beverages in Minnesota!

This past November, Congress passed new federal Budget Bill language that will ban Minnesota's legal, hemp-derived THC beverages — unless Congress now passes a law to allow them.

Minnesota's THC beverages are state-regulated, lab-tested, age-restricted, and safely sold through licensed retailers. But under the new federal rules, these products will become illegal nationwide, wiping out a responsible consumer option and shutting down a fast-growing Minnesota industry.

Tell Congress to act now and pass legislation that protects Minnesota's legal, state-regulated THC beverages. Support smart regulation — not a federal ban on safe, legal products.

Contacting your federal representatives is urgent to protect your business and your customers' access to safe, legal products.



— Tony Chesak
MLBA Executive Director
tony@mlba.com

MLBA has created an easy-to-use form to contact your federal officials.

- ✓ We've made the process as simple as possible.
- ✓ Go to: mnsmart.org/take-action or scan the QR Code on the right
- ✓ All you have to do is put in your name and address.
- ✓ The system does the rest!!!!
- ✓ You are free to edit the pre-written message if you want.
- ✓ Your THC customers can also use the system to contact their officials.



Send a letter to your U.S. Congresspersons scan here.

Feel free to share the link (<https://www.mnsmart.org/take-action>) on your customer communications (Facebook, email etc.)

I'll keep MLBA Members up to date by email as the situation develops. So make sure you are an MLBA Member, see page 16.

Let me know if you have questions.

MINNESOTA LEADS THE WAY:

How GRD is Defining the Future of Hemp-Derived Beverages.

November 5, 2025



When it comes to hemp-derived beverages and edibles, all eyes are on Minnesota. In just a few short years, the state has become the nation's most mature and well-regulated market for low-dose THC products, a market built not by accident, but by collaboration, education, and a shared commitment to doing things the right way. And few companies have been more instrumental in shaping that landscape than Global Reserve Distribution (GRD), a Minnesota-based distributor currently serving more than 1,400 retailers statewide.

Founded on the idea that compliance and trust are the foundation of any sustainable industry, GRD has grown into a central player connecting manufacturers, regulators, and retailers. Its exclusive focus on hemp-derived beverages and edibles has allowed the company to build unmatched category expertise and help retailers navigate one of the fastest-evolving segments in the beverage world. "We didn't start out only selling THC products," says Hans "Moose" Hardisty, president of GRD. "But as the market evolved, we realized that focusing on one thing and being the best at it was the smartest move. That focus has made our sales reps the leading subject-matter experts in the state. They know the category, the rules, and the retailers inside and out."

When Minnesota's early hemp law, Statute 151, first codified hemp edibles into law with the state's push for cannabis

legislation, retailers and suppliers alike found themselves operating in unfamiliar territory. Compliance requirements were new, and existing sales of non-compliant products in the market gave many retailers pause. GRD quickly recognized that the only way to build a lasting market was to lead with education, not just distribution. Through countless retailer visits, training sessions, and one-on-one consultations, GRD has been earning a reputation as a trusted partner for stores looking to enter the category responsibly. Its merchandising and sampling teams continue to play a hands-on role across the state, making sure customers have the right information, compliant packaging, and properly labeled products on their shelves.

"Our mission has always been about more than just moving cases," Hardisty explains. "We help retailers understand what's legal, what's tested, and what's changing. That trust is why the Minnesota market has grown the right way and why other states are now watching us."

While most retailers know GRD for its boots-on-the-ground service, far fewer realize how much work the company does behind the scenes to keep the industry stable and informed. During Minnesota's ongoing transition from Statute 151 to Statute 342, and amid mounting uncertainty at the federal level, GRD has been deeply involved in ongoing policy

discussions that shape the future of the category. A typical week can include multiple all-hands trade-group meetings, one-on-one calls with legislators, and constant coordination with lobbyists who track every development in St. Paul and Washington, D.C.

“OUR GOAL IS TO MAKE SURE WE’RE GETTING ACCURATE, FIRST HAND INFORMATION THAT WE CAN BRING BACK TO OUR SUPPLIERS AND CUSTOMERS,”

Hardisty says. “That’s what keeps everyone informed and compliant, even as the ground shifts under our feet.” That commitment to staying connected has made GRD a trusted resource not just for retailers and brands, but also for policymakers seeking real-world insight. The company regularly collaborates with trade associations and advocacy groups to ensure Minnesota’s framework remains practical, enforceable, and focused on public safety.

For Minnesota’s 6,000-plus licensed retailers, the hemp beverage category can still feel like uncharted territory. GRD’s statewide sales and merchandising teams aim to simplify it. Because they focus exclusively on hemp-derived products, GRD’s representatives bring clarity where confusion often reigns, helping retailers select compliant brands, design effective displays, and train staff on how to talk with consumers responsibly.

Sampling programs are another cornerstone of GRD’s strategy. By coordinating in-store tastings and educational events, GRD helps introduce new customers to hemp beverages in a safe, transparent, and approachable way, bridging the gap between curiosity and confidence. Earning business the old fashioned way, competing for shelf space in a market dominated by large and well-established distributors meant GRD had to take a different path. From day one, the company focused on service, visibility, and relationships, the things that can’t be replicated by scale alone.

“WE KNEW THE BEST WAY TO SEPARATE OURSELVES FROM THE PACK WAS BY PUTTING IN THE WORK,”

Hardisty says. “Our merchandisers and sales reps are in stores every day facing cans, taking inventory, and working with retailers to improve their position at retail. When retailers see us there week after week, it makes an impression.” That daily presence extends beyond merchandising. GRD coordinates multiple tastings across the state nearly every day, covering a portion of the cost to make it easier for suppliers of all sizes to participate and connect directly with Minnesota consumers. The approach has paid off. Both retailers and brands have taken notice.

Suppliers from across the country have chosen to partner with GRD, drawn to the company’s expertise and commitment to compliance. From Minnesota pioneers like Looner and Crooked, to Birch’s on the Lake (crafted by the expert brewers behind the beloved Long Lake supper club), to Hop the Wave by long-time Portland, Maine craft brewery Geary Brewing, to Miami’s Amigos, and North Carolina’s Herbal Oasis, GRD’s portfolio reflects both local roots and national reach.

As more states consider regulating hemp-derived cannabinoids, Minnesota’s model is being studied closely, and GRD hopes others will follow suit. A transparent, well-regulated market benefits everyone: consumers gain confidence, retailers reduce risk, and responsible manufacturers have a stable path to growth. “Minnesota has proven that a safe, tested, and transparent market can exist,” Hardisty notes. “We want other states to look at what we’ve done here and realize it’s possible to build something sustainable and legitimate. That’s how we move this industry forward.” With enforcement of Statute 342 set to take full effect in 2026, GRD remains committed to supporting its retail partners through every step of the transition, making sure that stores large and small continue to thrive in a compliant and profitable way.



“THIS CATEGORY IS ABOUT CONNECTION, NOT CONFUSION.”

GRD
DISTRIBUTION DONE RIGHT

That growth isn’t theoretical; it’s visible. GRD has expanded rapidly alongside Minnesota’s hemp beverage industry, and the company is now preparing for its next chapter. Having outgrown its current space in Spring Lake Park, GRD is relocating its operations team to a new office in Minneapolis while developing a new headquarters and warehouse on a 1.2-acre property in the city’s Bryn Mawr neighborhood. The forthcoming facility will serve as a state-of-the-art operations hub, bringing together GRD’s warehouse, logistics, and administrative teams under one roof. “What we’re doing is working, and we’re growing by leaps and bounds,” Hardisty says. “This new facility will allow us to serve our partners even better as this category continues to expand.” From the warehouse floor in Minneapolis to the legislative halls in St. Paul, GRD’s work touches every corner of Minnesota’s hemp beverage ecosystem. It’s a company that believes distribution is more than logistics; it’s stewardship. By focusing exclusively on THC products, investing in education, and staying deeply connected to policymakers, GRD has helped Minnesota become not only the national leader in hemp-derived beverages but also the proof that responsible innovation works.

“This category is about connection, not confusion,” Hardisty says in closing. “When retailers, suppliers, and regulators work together, we build something that lasts, and Minnesota is showing the whole country how it’s done.” For more information about GRD’s distribution services, sampling programs, and retail partnerships, visit www.grdistro.com.



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-Alissa S. Horan, Owner Sawmill Saloon & Restaurant



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MN Legislators React to the Hemp Derived THC Beverages and Edibles Federal Law Changes



— Tim Mahoney
MLBA President
The Loon Cafe, Mpls

PRESS RELEASE

FROM: Senator Scott Dibble & Senator Lindsey Port

November 12, 2025

Contact: Skyler Vilt • skyler.vilt@mnsenate.gov • 507-219-9940

Senator Scott Dibble and Senator Lindsey Port Blast Shutdown Deal That Devastates Minnesota's Pioneering Hemp-Derived THC Drink Market

(ST. PAUL, MN) — A provision included in the deal to end the government shutdown will devastate and likely end Minnesota's nation leading legal hemp-derived THC drink market. Since its legalization in 2022, the Minnesota industry has grown to include more than 5,000 licensed retailers with more than \$200 million in annual revenue.

In response, Senator Scott Dibble (DFL-Minneapolis) and Senator Lindsey Port (DFL-Burnsville), authors of the 2025 and 2023 cannabis legislation in Minnesota, respectively, are calling on Minnesota's Congressional delegation to prevent this provision from being included in any final shutdown deal.

“This change is an existential threat to Minnesota's nation-leading THC hemp drink industry and must be rejected. We've created a model that works — one that has empowered thousands of small business owners and entrepreneurs to build their dreams, hire local workers, and contribute to a thriving, responsible marketplace. Instead of learning from our success, Congress has inserted itself in the most heavy-handed and short-sighted way possible, at the behest of entrenched competitors in other industries who see Minnesota's innovation as a threat. This will destroy legitimate businesses, eliminate good-paying jobs, and wipe out years of progress made by local entrepreneurs who played by the rules.

“Minnesota should not have its market rules written by Mitch McConnell or dictated by Washington lobbyists protecting their own interests. This is an inappropriate and reckless interference in a state's right to regulate its own markets and industries responsibly. Consumers and business leaders in Minnesota who have built this market the right way deserve better. Congress must remove this language from the shutdown bill or work immediately to fix it before irreparable harm is done.”

###

Open Letter from Looner Cannabis Co.

The following letter is from the owners of Looner, a Spring Lake Park-based Hemp-Derived THC edibles and beverages company.



— Dean Rose
Vice President Off-Sale
Broadway Liquor Outlet, Mpls

Dear Looner Family,

As many of you already know, our industry took a massive hit in Congress in November. Under the new federal action, hemp derived products have been banned. This is devastating for us at Looner, not only because of how it affects our team and our company, but also because of the negative impact it will have on our wholesale and retail partners and the millions of consumers who have relied on hemp products for relief and enjoyment.

This has been disheartening for all of us, but we are not giving up and we hope you won't either. The fight to shift this from a federal ban to sensible regulation is far from over. As we plan our next steps, here's the most important thing to keep in mind:

We still have 365 days to sell hemp-based products exactly as we have been. The new federal law does not take effect until November 2026. Between now and November 2026, here's what we can do in Minnesota:

- Get Loud! We need to make it clear to everyone, especially Minnesota state Senators and Representatives, just how severe the impact will be: widespread job losses, struggling businesses, and significant tax revenue wiped out.
- Keeping Selling. No matter what, we still have a long runway to continue offering our products and benefiting from them. Many of you have only recently added these products to your shelves and have already found success and we cannot let this announcement overshadow what remains a significant period of opportunity.

Looner is not going anywhere.

- We will continue making our products until we absolutely cannot.
- We will continue being your partner and will lead the charge toward new paths forward.
- We will continue being a resource and support system for everyone we work with, because we would not be here without you.

Thank you for standing with us through this moment. We will navigate it together. Thanks.

Genya and Sean
drink.loonersodas.com

PS: See our ad on page 23 of this issue of PROOF!

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Results of the Off-Year Elections

*Local and National Races of Interest from November,
Updated with MN Special Election Results from January.*

This update is from MLBA's Government Relations Team, "Momentum Advocacy."

Minneapolis Mayor - This went into the second round of ranked choice ballot counting because no candidate secured enough votes to win outright on the first ballot. **Incumbent Mayor Jacob Frey defeated Sen. Omar Fateh** in the second counting with 50.02% to 44.3%. Dwayne Davis and Jazz Hampton were eliminated after the first count.

Minneapolis City Council -

All 13 Wards were up for election, 12 Wards were decided on first choice votes except Ward 5 which resulted in 2nd-choice votes.

- **Ward 1** - Incumbent Elliott Payne won re-election.
- **Ward 2** - Incumbent Robin Wonsley won re-election.
- **Ward 3** - Incumbent Michael Rainville won re-election.
- **Ward 4** - Incumbent LaTrisha Vetaw won re-election.
- **Ward 5** - Pearl Warren has won the race for the open seat after ranked-choice votes were counted on November 5th.
- **Ward 6** - Incumbent Jamal Osman won re-election.
- **Ward 7** - Challenger Elizabeth Shaffer defeated Incumbent Katie Cashman.
- **Ward 8** - Soren Stevenson defeated Josh Bassais for this open seat.
- **Ward 9** - Incumbent Jason Chavez won re-election.
- **Ward 10** - Incumbent Aisha Chugthai won re-election.
- **Ward 11** - Jamison Whiting defeated Mariam DeMello for this open seat.
- **Ward 12** - Incumbent Aurin Chowdhury won re-election.
- **Ward 13** - Incumbent Linea Palmisano won re-election.

Minnesota Senate District 29 (Wright County) - Michael Holmstrom Jr. (R) defeated Louis McNutt (DFL), winning the seat that opened due to the death of Sen. Bruce Anderson (R).

St. Paul Mayor - Challenger State Rep. Kaohly Her defeated Incumbent Mayor Melvin Carter. ** NOTE: This will trigger a special election for House District 64A**.

Minnesota Senate District 47 (Woodbury) - State Rep. Amanda Hemmingsen-Jaeger (DFL) defeated Dwight Dorau (R) to fill the vacancy left after the resignation of Senator Nicole Mitchell (DFL). *** NOTE: This will trigger a special election for House District 47A ***

UPDATE...

** *Dist. 64A Special Election: Meg Nikolai-Luger (DFL) won with over 95% of the vote over the Republican Dan Walsh. She won a contested, 6-way primary with 29.91% of the vote in December.*

*** *Dist. 47A Special Election: Shelley Buck (DFL) won an uncontested general election after winning 87% in the primary.*

The MN House will officially return to a 67-67 tie and the Senate stays at a 34-33 DFL majority. All House and Senate seats are up for election this fall.

National Races of Interest

- **Virginia Governor** - Abigail Spanberger (D) defeats Lt Gov. Winsome Earle-Sears (R) to succeed the term limited Governor Glenn Youngkin (R).
- **Virginia Attorney General** - Challenger Jay Jones (D) defeated incumbent AG Jason Miyares (R).
- **Virginia House** - Democrats picked up 13 seats in the House of Delegates and have a commanding majority (Like Minnesota, Virginia's legislative majorities swing back and forth, sometimes having a split House and Senate.)
- **New Jersey Governor** - Mikie Sherill (D) defeats Jack Ciattarelli (R) to succeed term limited Governor Phil Murphy (D).
- **New York City Mayor** - Democratic Socialist Zohran Mamdani defeats former NY Gov. Andrew Cuomo (D) and Curtis Sliwa (R).
- **California - Proposition 50** passed regarding Congressional Redistricting Maps, they will be in play for 2026.

If you have any questions about impacts of certain races or are looking for additional information, please feel free to reach out to anyone on the Momentum team. - Will Waggoner, Lobbyist & Political Strategist will@momentum-advocacy.com



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cory@grdistro.com

Cvr, pp 6-7

Ice Manufacturers



Ace Ice, Matt King,

612.824.0745,
matt@aceice.com

Insurance Agents



KLB Insurance (Pg. 8)
Kim Brown, 651.730.9803
kim@klbins.com



Cartier Agency
Matthew Cartier, 218.727.5992
matt@caduluth.com



Corporate 4 Insurance
Dan Gutlovics, 952.893.9218
dgutlovics@corporatfour.com



Dwight Swanstrom Co.
Greg Brisky, 218.727.8324
www.dwightswanstrom.com



Ebner Insurance
Jenny Pederson, 218.631.3274
jenny.pederson@ebnerinsurance.com



IL Casualty Co. (pg. 2)
Avalon Thomas-Roebal,
309.793.1700 www.ilcasco.com



Key City Insurance
Deb Johannsen, 507.625.7667
deb@keycityins.com



Miller Hartwig Insurance
Joshua Havlik, 952-381-4916
jhavlik@millerhartwig.com



North Risk Partners
Jeremy Miller, 651.319.0482
www.northriskpartners.com



Paulet Slater, Inc.
Jeff Stanley, 651.644.0311
jcstanley@pauletslater.com



Pine Insurance Agency
Lacy Johnson, 320.629.2515
lacy@pineagency.us



Reliable Agency
Scott Wojtysiak, 218-879-4663
scott@reliablemn.com



Society Insurance
Tim Birk, 920.952.0824,
marketing@societyinsurance.com



Twin City Group
David Bell, 952-924-6900
dbell@twincitygroup.com

ID Scanners



TokenWorks
Daniel Green, 914-704-3100
dang@tokenworks.com
www.idscanner.com

Music Licensing



ASCAP
Lauren Autry (615) 620-6654
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BMI
Jessica Frost, 615-401-2865
jfrost@bmi.com



SESAC
Jill Kemezis, 615-320-0055
jkemezis@sesac.com

Point of Sale

Automated Transaction Services

Russell Bialke, 651-493-3585



Cloud Retailer
Gary Noble, 320-223-2293
garyn@cloudretailer.com



Dailey Data & Associates
Mary Dailey, 763.253.0481
mary@daileydata.com



Ingage I.T.
Scott Overson,
612-861-5277 • scott@ingageit.com



Rate Zero LLC
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mPower Beverage Software

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sgodwin@mpowerbeverage.com

Public Relations/Marketing



Rosedahl Public Affairs
Leslie Rosedahl, 651-353-1818
leslie@rosedahlpublicaffairs.com

Refrigeration



CMI Refrigeration
Joe Johnson, 612.824.0745
joiej@shamrockgroup.net



Quality Refrigeration
Ken Fricke, 612-861-7350
Ken@qualityrefrig.com

Restaurant Equipment



ECOLAB
Paul Geffre, 612-269-6941
paul.geffre@ecolab.com
www.ecolab.com

Spirits Companies



Bacardi USA
Stephanie Georgesen, 651-491-2648
sgeorgesesen@bacardi.com



Beam Suntory
Ben Young, 612-845-3469
Ben.Young@beamsuntory.com



Crooked Water Spirits
Heather Manley, 612-730-0095,
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Diageo
Chris Gotziaman,
612-353-7918, Chris.Gotziaman@diageo.com



RedLocks Irish Whiskey
Kieran Folliard, 612-790-3994
kieran@RedLocks.com

Spirits/Wine Distributors



Breakthru Beverage MN
Calen Wells, 651-482-1133
www.breakthrubev.com



Bellboy Corporation
Dave Gewolb, 952-544-7791
davidg@bellboycorp.com



Johnson Brothers
AJ Atta, 651-649-5800
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Southern Glazers W&S
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npahl@sgws.com



Rue 38
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Vinocopia
Marion Dauner,
612.455.4005 • marion@vinocopia.com



The Wine Company
Robbin Hilgert, 651.487.1212
Robbinh@thewinecompany.net

Wine Companies



Paustis Wine Co.
Steve Olson,
763-550-9545
solson@paustiswine.com

From the Door to the Data: How PatronsCan Supports



Every bar, nightclub, and liquor retailer in Minnesota feels the pressure of getting ID checks right. From busy college-town bars to small, family-run liquor stores, license holders must accurately verify age, detect fake IDs, and screen out high-risk individuals while staying compliant with state and local laws.

With ID scanning technology like PatronsCan, manual checks are replaced with a secure digital system to dramatically reduce security incidents by up to 97%, and prevent underage entry. In turn, this supports compliance with Minnesota’s alcohol laws, enforced statewide by the Department of Public Safety’s Alcohol and Gambling Enforcement (AGE) division.

For MLBA members represented by the association since the early 1950s, reliable ID scanning is another tool alongside MLBA’s training, resources, and advocacy to help keep doors open, licenses protected, and communities safe, aligning with the values of PatronsCan.

Core Benefits of an ID Scanner for Bars and Clubs

Minnesota’s hospitality and liquor retailers are on the front lines, especially in college communities and high-traffic entertainment districts. Thus, implementing an ID scanner transforms the front door from a bottleneck into a strategic checkpoint.

On top of flag checking and fake ID detection, PatronsCan also provides marketing and operational intelligence, such as capacity count and real-time device notifications for alerts.

Differences between Manual ID Check vs. PatronsCan:

Feature	Manual ID Check	PatronsCan
Fake ID Detection	Relies on memory and lighting; error-prone	Analyzes 8,500+ data points; >99% accuracy
Flagged Patron Alerts	None – relies on staff recall	Real-time database alerts
Entry Speed	15 – 30 seconds per guest	Under 5 seconds per guest
Data Collection	None	Anonymized demographics, traffic trends, and member history
Multi-Door Coordination	Difficult or not possible	Fully synchronized across all entrances

Spotting Fake IDs with Precision

Today, fake IDs are engineered to fool the untrained eye, which is why PatronsCan decodes over 8,500 data points embedded in government-issued IDs, ranging from magnetic stripes and 2D barcodes to microprint and UV features. These systems verify authenticity in under five seconds and support more than 14,000 ID and Document formats worldwide, including driver’s licenses and passports.

Reducing Security Incidents Through Proactive Screening

One of the most immediate impacts of age verification technology is its ability to prevent problems before they occur. Systems that integrate real-time databases of flagged individuals (i.e. those with histories of assault, fraud, or vandalism) allow door staff to act fast.

As Ronny Boyce from the Paparazzi Night Club puts it: *"The first night using the scanner detected a fake ID that should have been caught. The system paid for itself in that moment. PatronsCan has been a lifesaver. We are very happy!"*

For Minnesota businesses operating under state liquor laws and subject to inspections from AGE, venues using PatronsCan reported up to a 97% reduction in security-related events, and more peace of mind to avoid penalties by law.

Streamlining Entry and Guest Management

PatronsCan eliminates guessing and speeds up entry without compromising safety. It can instantly recognize VIPs, apply membership tiers, or cross-reference guestlists uploaded via mobile apps. Multi-door or multi-location venues benefit from real-time syncing across all entry points, stopping ID sharing or re-entry by flagged individuals.

Additionally, challenge questions can be auto generated if staff suspect someone is using another person’s ID, adding a discreet but effective layer of verification. This level of technology doesn’t just reduce risk – it enhances guest experience. Patrons move through lines faster, VIPs feel valued, and staff operate with greater confidence. In Minnesota’s competitive hospitality landscape, these small advantages add up to stronger reputations and repeat business.

MLBA Members Across Minnesota!

www.patronscan.com

Unlocking Actionable Business Insights

Beyond the door, today's ID scanning platforms generate valuable anonymized demographic and traffic data. Venue operators receive hourly updates on guest count, gender split, age distribution, and peak entry times, all anonymously yet securely.

For MLBA operators, this type of insight can support:

- Planning staffing levels around Vikings, Twins, Wild, Gophers, or local event schedules
- Tailoring promotions, live music, or specials to match the actual crowd
- Evaluating the impact of MLBA-promoted initiatives or local marketing campaigns

As one venue owner noted, "I love that you get the demographics... it helps operate your business smarter to the actual audience who walks through the door." For leaders managing recurring events or seasonal pop-ups, these insights directly improve return on marketing and operational investments.

Smart Security Starts with an ID Scanner

In today's nightlife landscape, where safety, compliance, and guest experience intersect, relying on manual ID checks alone is increasingly risky. For MLBA members who already benefit from education, training, and legislative advocacy, a platform like Patronscan becomes the on-the-ground tool that brings those responsible service principles to life. Beyond security, it provides real-time insights that enhance operations and marketing.

Driven by a shared commitment to "protecting and promoting licensed beverage retailers in the State of Minnesota" and by our own vision to Build Trust and shape a Safer World, Patronscan is proud to support MLBA members in operating smarter, safer, and more successful businesses across Minnesota.

For more info contact:
 Mitchell Dass
 mitchell@patronscan.com
 587-438-4708

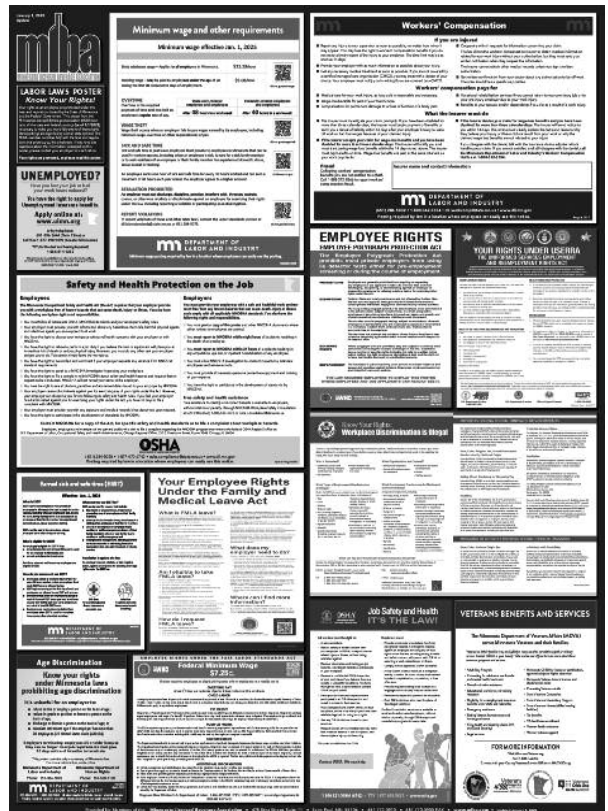
MLBA Members ONLY get a Free All-in-One Labor Laws Poster!

For over 20 years, we have created a brand new updated "Labor Laws" poster for 2026! This 25"x34" full color all-in-one poster has all the State and Federal postings required by law to be made visible to your employees. Only MLBA Members received a brand new poster in the mail each year including 2026!

New on this poster is an updated Minimum Wage posting from the State of Minnesota. Effective Jan. 1, 2026, the state's minimum-wage rate for all employers, including large employers, small employers, youth and J-1 visa wages for hotels, motels and lodging establishments, increased to **\$11.41 an hour**. The law still allows for a 90-day training wage for workers under age 20. The current hourly training wage has increased to \$9.31.

Also new is a required posting on Minnesota Paid Leave law that took effect January 1, 2026.

MLBA, Protecting and Promoting Licensed Beverage Retailers in the State of Minnesota Since 1953!



Actual poster is 25" x 34" and full color

Thousands of MLBA Members Get These Great Member Benefits!



Aside from being part of a great trade association that is the voice of reason at the State Capitol every year, MLBA provides (or have Allied Members that provide) dozens of member benefits designed to help you protect and grow your business. **Now MLBA Members can get exclusive discounts for Allied Members on MLBA.com Buyer's Guide.** (See *MLBA.com* for more info on the *Buyer's Guide*.) So if you're not already a member, sign up today! Just fill out the membership form below or go to MLBA.com!

- ✓ **Great Rates on Liquor Liability and Insurance Programs!**
 - ✓ **Alcohol Awareness & Server Training Services, Either Held at Your Business or Online at mlba.com!**
 - ✓ **Music Licensing Discounts (ASCAP, BMI & SESAC)!**
 - ✓ **FREE Updated Labor Law Poster Service!**
 - ✓ **Employee Health, Dental and Life Insurance Packages!**
 - ✓ **Business Brokerage, Selling or Buying!**
 - ✓ **Credit Card Processing Discounted Rates!**
 - ✓ **Beverage & Food Inventory Systems!**
 - ✓ **Marketing and Public Relations**
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- And Much, Much More!**

- Membership Application -

Yes, I want to join MLBA to be eligible for all MLBA Member Benefits & Programs

Your Name: _____

Corporate Name: _____

Business Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Membership Dues

Members of the Association shall pay annual membership dues as follows:

On and Off-Sale: **\$360**

Additional Sites: **\$240** (attach additional site information)

Allied Business Members: **\$499**

*Up to 80% of your dues are tax deductible.
MLBA is a 501(c)6 trade association.*

Please complete this with check made out to MLBA.

*To sign up for automatic monthly dues: **\$30.00 / month**
for general membership, call MLBA at 651-772-0910.*



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Four Major US Performance Rights Organizations (PROs) Announce Expansion of Songview to Include Musical Works Information from GMR and SESAC

ASCAP, BMI, GMR and SESAC Collaborate to Provide a Single Source of Detailed Public Performance Copyright Information for Over 38 Million Songs Offering Even More Transparency for the Industry

NEW YORK (Sept. 29, 2025) --The four major performing rights organizations in the United States today announced a landmark expansion of **Songview**, the industry's comprehensive US public performance copyright data resource launched by ASCAP and BMI in December 2020. For the first time, the expanded Songview platform will feature information for over 38 million musical works licensed by the four major performing rights organizations in the United States, offering the industry the most authoritative view of public performance copyright ownership and administration shares from a single source. This effort builds on each of the PRO's long-standing efforts to provide comprehensive data for their respective repertoires.

Over the coming months, **Songview** will begin incorporating data from GMR and SESAC, starting with the addition of all 100%-owned works represented by GMR and SESAC. In addition, Songview will enhance the limited data that currently appears for GMR and SESAC works by including the publisher names for GMR and SESAC works that have split ownership percentages with ASCAP and/or BMI, one of the most popular information requests from Songview users. The ownership percentages for the GMR and SESAC split works are part of a future plan.

"As a Member of Congress, I have long called for greater transparency into music licensing to ensure businesses have the information they need to make informed licensing decisions. This is because music ownership data has for years been fragmented and opaque, compounded by continued growth in the

performing rights industry," said **Congressman Scott Fitzgerald (WI-05)**. "With today's announcement, we take a giant step towards transparency, and towards my goal of a complete and authoritative database. I congratulate ASCAP, BMI, SESAC, and GMR on their partnership, and I look forward to continuing to work with them to ensure the database meets the needs of Wisconsin businesses."

House IP Subcommittee Chairman Darrell Issa (CA-48) said, "Our copyright system is the backbone of our creative economy, with clarity and transparency essential to ensuring creators have the compensation they deserve while licensees have the predictability they need. I congratulate ASCAP, BMI, SESAC, and GMR on the launch of a new and improved Songview to enhance clarity and transparency in music licensing."

ASCAP CEO Elizabeth Matthews commented, "We are thrilled to collaborate with BMI, GMR and SESAC as we innovate to provide more transparency to licensees into musical ownership data for the combined repertoires of the most performed music in the world."

BMI President & CEO Mike O'Neill added, "It was always our intention to ensure Songview would be the single most comprehensive source of copyright information for the industry, which is why the addition of GMR and SESAC data is so important. Having the four major US PROs come together to enhance data transparency highlights how we as an industry can successfully collaborate and deliver solutions that benefit the entire music community."



SONGVIEW



— Jennifer Schoenzeit
MLBA Past President
Zipps Liquor, Minneapolis

Randy Grimmatt, Co-Founder and CEO of Global Music Rights commented, “With the addition of the GMR and SESAC repertoire to Songview, the most comprehensive view of US songwriter and publishing information will represent over 38 million works. This is a major step in addressing the needs of licensees for a comprehensive view of PRO licensing obligations.”

John Josephson, Chairman & CEO of SESAC said, “The addition of SESAC and GMR to Songview will provide a comprehensive view of ownership data and licensing representation for the largest music market in the world. This collaborative solution addresses requests from licensees and Congress that extends the visibility of repertory data already available from SESAC.”

The Songview engine was built from the ground up by a cross functional team of copyright, technical, distribution and product experts from ASCAP and BMI. The system ingests song ownership information, processes and reconciles that information based on agreed-upon rules, then sends the reconciled data back out to the ASCAP and BMI searchable databases. Information displayed for those works includes songwriters and their affiliations, publisher data, performers, alternate song titles and ISWC and IPI codes. Reconciled songs appear with a green checkmark to indicate that each of the PROs agree on the information.

The information is free to the public and currently accessible on the ASCAP and BMI websites.

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Jodie Thomas for BMI
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Jenna Smith for SESAC
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MLBA's Premium Allied Members

These members have stepped up their investment!
(See page 12-13 for all MLBA Allied Member listings.)

Platinum Members




Illinois
Casualty
Company

Avalon Thomas-Roebal
309-793-1700
AvalonT@ilcasco.com

Kim Brown
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DOORDASH

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Chris Strano
216-961-3500
cstrano@arrowinternational.com



Gold Members

Jon Weaver
248-885-3025
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Sara Navidazar
818-727-1690
snavidazar@diamondgame.com

Silver Members

Paul Geffre
612-269-6941
paul.geffre@ecolab.com



Nick Pahl
612-623-1532
npahl@sgws.com

Bronze Member

John Glenn
952-446-9262
john.glenn@tenthandblake.com





— Mike Doherty
(a.k.a. Boardhead)
Editor/Designer PROOF

Alcohol Quotes of the Month

“I drink to make other people more interesting.”

— *Ernest Hemingway*

.....

“What whiskey will not cure, there is no cure for.”

— *Irish Proverb*

Toast of the Month

“Be at war with your vices, at peace with your neighbors, and let every new year find you a better person.”

... Alcohol Warning Labels in Ireland Since 2020 supermarkets and other shops in Ireland have had to put up physical barriers between sections selling alcohol and food products. But some bottles and cans of alcohol now carry some of the strongest warning labels anywhere in the world. Products with the new labels state drinking causes liver disease and is linked to cancer. However, the Irish government has delayed the required labeling until 2028, thanks to lobbying by the adult beverage industry. Alcohol consumption has fallen by around a third over the past 25 years, according to figures from The Drinks Industry Group of Ireland (DIGI). Ireland was one of the first countries in the west to restrict smoking since 2004. Minnesota’s smoking ban in bars and restaurants was signed into law May 16, 2007, and became effective October 1, 2007.

... Alcohol Restrictions Coming to Poland? Poland’s parliament is preparing to roll out sweeping changes to alcohol regulations, proposing the toughest restrictions the country has seen in years. The draft measures would ban nighttime off-sales, tighten advertising rules, and introduce strict controls on online alcohol trading. If approved, the new regulations would mark a major shift in Poland’s approach to alcohol policy, sparking debate among businesses and public health advocates.

... Drinking Age in Various European Countries The first two articles this issue got me to thinking about the drinking age in Europe. The drinking age in most of Europe is 18, but many countries have a lower age of 16 for certain types of alcohol like beer and wine. Some countries, such as Denmark, Germany, and Switzerland, allow the purchase and consumption of beer and wine at 16, but require an age of 18 for spirits. Others, like Luxembourg, have no minimum legal drinking age for off-premise sales of beer and wine. Laws can vary depending on the type of alcohol, the location (on-premise vs. off-premise), and whether a minor is accompanied by an adult. The highest legal drinking age in Europe is 20, with Lithuania and Iceland requiring individuals to be this age to purchase alcohol. Other countries, such as Sweden, have a minimum age of 18 for purchasing in bars but enforce a higher age of 20 for purchasing stronger alcoholic beverages.

... Rogue Brewery Shuts Down The Oregon brewery has closed all its operations, including its main brewery in Newport and its remaining pubs in Astoria, Salem, and Portland, effective November 14, 2025. The company’s parent, Oregon Brewing Company, filed for Chapter 7 bankruptcy liquidation on November 24, 2025, citing declining sales and significant debt to landlords and tax

authorities. The company abruptly shut down all facilities with many employees reportedly not being given prior warning. Some reasons for closure were financial struggles, including declining sales and significant debt. Rogue owed over \$545,000 to the Port of Newport and tens of thousands to Lincoln County for taxes. The company’s closure is seen as a significant loss for the Oregon craft beer scene.

... Countries with No Limit for DWI There are actually countries that have no restrictions for drinking and driving. So would this make you more or less likely to visit these countries?

According to WHO data from 2018, the following countries had no legal limit for drinking and driving:

- Antigua and Barbuda, (Caribbean)
- Barbados, (Caribbean)
- Burundi, (Africa)
- Comoros, (Indian Ocean)
- Gambia, (Africa)
- Grenada, (Caribbean)
- Guatemala, (Central Am.)
- Guinea-Bissau, (Africa)
- Indonesia, (SE Asia)
- Liberia, (Africa)
- Marshall Islands, (S. Pacific)
- Niger, (Africa)
- St Vincent and the Grenadines, (Caribbean)
- Sao Tome and Principe, (Africa)
- Senegal, (Africa)
- Sierra Leone, (Africa)
- South Sudan, (Africa)
- Togo (Africa)

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MN Wine & Spirits Wholesalers	21

Email Updates

MLBA's Newsletters and Updates are E-mailed to all MLBA Members!! If you are not receiving it, either...

You're Not a Member
(See page 16 for a member application!)

You have not provided us with your email

(Email us at info@mlba.com to get on the list and put us in your address book to prevent spam filtering.)

You will get notifications about legislation, be updated on local issues and law changes, plus notifications on MLBA Events and much more!

Join MLBA TODAY!! (see p. 16 or mlba.com)



Beers That Can Be Legally Sold in 3.2 Licenses

With Minnesota being the only state with a specific 3.2 license, some say there will be no 3.2 beer. These 3.2 (or less) Alcohol by Weight (equivalent to 4.0 Alcohol by Volume) beers are NOT going away! In fact low carb, low alcohol beer is a growing segment!



Here are just a sampling of 3.2 beers available to those with a 3.2 license in the state of Minnesota: Amstel Light, Ballast Point Even Keel IPA, Blue Moon LightSky, Budweiser Select 55, Corona Premier, Deschutes Da Shootz Pilsner, Deschutes Wowza, Dogfish Head Slightly Mighty IPA, Fair State Dry January IPA, Golden Road Mango Cart Wheat, Goose Island So-Lo IPA, Hamm's Light, Heineken Light, Labatt Blue Light, Lagunitas Daytime IPA, Lambic, Lindemans Framboise, Lindemans Kriek Lambic, Lindemans Peche, Lindemans Pomegranate Lambic, Michelob Ultra Infusions, Miller 64, Murphy's Irish Stout, New Belgium Mural Agua Fresca Cerveza, Odell Good Behavior IPA, Redbridge Gluten Free, Schofferhofer Hefeweizen Grapefruit, Southern Tier Swipe Light Lager, Stiegl Radler, Stone Neverending Haze IPA, Sufferfest Repeat Kolsch, Ultra Pure Gold, White Claw 70, Heineken Silver and many more!



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